TWO SHORT

DISCOURSES

AGAINST THE

Romaniſts:

I. An Account of the *Fundamental Principle* of *Popery*, and of the Inſufficiency of the *Proofs* which they have for it.

II. An Anſwer to *Six Queries* propoſed to a *Gentlewoman* of the *Church* of *England*, by an *Emiſſary* of the *Church* of *Rome*.

With a new PREFACE particularly relating to the Biſhop of *Meaux*, and other Modern Complainers of Miſrepreſentation.

By *HENRY DODWELL*, M. A. late of *Trinity* College near *Dublin*, now *Camden*-Profeſſor of *Oxford*.

IMPRIMATUR,

April 16. 1688. *Jo. BATTELY.*

LONDON:

Printed for *Benj. Tooke.* MDCLXXXVIII.

AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

Fundamental Principle

OF

POPERY,

As it is a

Diſtinct Communion:

AND

Of the Inſufficiency of the *Proofs* which they have for it. With a new Preface particularly relating to the Biſhop of *Meaux*, and other Modern Complainers of Miſrepreſentation.

By *HENRY DODWELL*, M. A. late of *Trinity* College near *Dublin*, now *Camden*-Profeſſor of *Oxford*.

LONDON:

Printed for *Benj. Tooke.* M DC LXXXVIII.

A

PREFACE,

With particular regard to the Biſhop of Meaux's *deſign in explaining the* Doctrine *of the* Romiſh Church, *and complaining of* Miſrepreſentations.

1. WHAT is deſigned here, is not to *foreſtall* what has been obſerved in the following Diſcourſe concerning the *Uſefulneſs* of the *Method* here propoſed of managing our Diſputes with the *Romaniſts*; but only to adapt it to our preſent *circumſtances*, in relation to the *contrary Method*, which is at preſent moſt received and inſiſted on by our Adverſaries. The *deſign* of this Preface.

2. It is ſtrange to ſee with what confidence our preſent Adverſaries have Tranſlated and urged the Biſhop of *Meaux*'s Book of *Expoſition* of the Doctrine of their Church, as if *our Churches* were any way concerned in it, as to the main Queſtion concerning the difference of *Communion*. I do not now intend to Diſpute (what others have ſufficiently accounted for) whether their Council of *Trent*, or even their *Church*, which receives many *more* Councils beſides that of *Trent*, be Reſponſible for what is charged on them in the *particulars* there inſiſted on. For us at preſent, it is ſufficient to ſhew, that what he there endeavours, if he had been as ſucceſsful in it as our Adverſaries think he has, is yet by no means ſufficient for his deſign, to juſtifie their *Church* Our *Church* of *England* is unconcerned in the Biſhop of *Meaux's* Book, as to the main Queſtion concerning *difference* of *Communion*.

as an *oppoſite Communion*, and particularly as *refuſing* to Communicate with *our Churches* in theſe Kingdoms.

In ſome of his Diſputes *our Church* is not *at all* concerned.

3. Some of thoſe Diſputes do not concern *our Churches* at *all*, particularly thoſe very momentous ones, concerning the neceſſity of *Epiſcopacy*, and a lawful *Call* and *Authority* to reform what otherwiſe were *fit* to be *reformed*. If they will allow us *Anglicane Liberties*, as many whom they dare not condemn for good Catholicks do challenge *Gallicane*, I cannot imagin what they can pretend againſt us in thoſe things which *themſelves* allow to be in the *Churches* Power, ſeeing we preſume no farther than our *own Juriſdictions*, and do not, as *they* do, impoſe our ſentiments as conditions of *Lay*, and therefore *Catholick* Communion. Why may we not therefore diſpence with the *Marriage* of our *Clergy*? Why may we not allow the *Communion* in *both kinds*? Why may we not allow the *Scriptures* to be Tranſlated into the *Vulgar Tongue*? Why may we not allow them to be *read* by the *Laity*? Why may we not allow the like *Tranſlations* of our Publick *Liturgies*? Our Adverſaries of the *Roman Communion* do not condemn theſe things as *unlawful* in their own *nature*, but only as *inexpedient*; nor yet even as inexpedient *univerſally*, but ſo as that in *circumſtances* they may become *expedient*, in which caſes they allow it to be in their *Churches* Power to *diſpenſe* with them, and have *actually* diſpenſed with them in the *Greeks*, *Sclavonians*, and *Calixtines*.

Particular Churches are not obliged to give *other Churches* an account of their *own deciſions* within their *own Juriſdictions*.

4. And certainly if *particular Churches* may be allowed any *Authority* at all, it muſt be in ſuch things as theſe, as are confeſſedly, *indifferent* in their own *nature*, and which become either good or bad *accidentally*, only as they are skilfully or unskilfully adapted to *Circumſtances*. Nor is there any reaſon to abridg *particular Churches* of this uſe of their Liberty without the conſent or approbation of Foreigners. For if the *goodneſs* or *inconvenience* of ſuch Decrees do depend on the *circumſtances*, then certainly it will be by no means fit to make any *univerſal* or *immutable* Decrees concerning ſuch things whoſe circumſtances are neither *univerſal* nor *immutable*. For *change* of *circumſtances* as it may make them good, ſo it may alſo make them *inconvenient* and *imprudent*, ſo that ſuch *univerſal Decrees* muſt require them as well when they are *imprudent* and *inconvenient*, as when they are in reaſon *fit* to be required. If therefore there muſt be allowed an *Authority* to *change* ſuch Decrees, and to make ſuch *variations* as the variety of *Circumſtances*

cumſtances may require: what *Authority* can be fitter for this purpoſe than that which judges on the *place*, and may therefore proceed on the moſt accurate *information?* And if the *Juſtice* of ſuch Decrees be grounded on their being adapted to *Circumſtances*; then certainly that Authority which has univerſally beſt reaſon to *know* thoſe *Circumſtances*, ought not to be determined by that which may as univerſally be preſumed *leſs* acquainted with them. And who can doubt but the Authorities of the *places* can better judg of *Circumſtances* when they may know them *immediately*, than either *Popes*, or even *General Councils*, who can only know the change of circumſtances at *ſecond* hand, from the information of *others* who have been upon the places? This whole Reaſoning is not only admitted, but is the very thing inſiſted on by thoſe who hold, that as *General Councils* are above the *Pope*, and therefore that the Decrees of Councils are more *obliging* than the Bulls of Popes; ſo even the Decrees of ſuch *Councils* themſelves cannot become obligatory to *particular Churches* till they be *received* by them. And therefore this *Reaſoning*, and all its juſt *conſequences*, cannot, even by themſelves, be condemned as *Heretical*, unleſs they will withal paſs the ſame ſevere cenſure on ſome conſiderable *Bodies* of their own Communion.

5. All that they can ſay, on this occaſion, is, that we might indeed have refuſed our conſent to the *firſt* determination of theſe things; but that having once *given* our conſent, we are no longer at liberty to withdraw it again afterwards without the *conſent* of the ſame Power which concurred with us at the firſt receiving of them. This might indeed have been pretended conſequently if the Power of *reception* at firſt had been expreſly *allowed* by the *Council*. But when the ſame Authors defend this ſame Authority in *particular Juriſdictions* to refuſe thoſe Decrees which give them no *Authority* to *refuſe* them, even at their *firſt reception*; nay which peremptorily *oblige* them to receive them; I cannot, for my part, underſtand how it is poſſible to maintain this, without an abſolute independence of particular Churches in matters of this nature. For certainly every Subject, properly ſo called, is under an *obligation* of Conſcience to *receive* all lawful Impoſitions of his competent and due Superiors, and therefore muſt ſin in *denying* his reception, which can by no means diſoblige him afterwards, unleſs we fancy that committing of a

By *Gallicane* Principles *particular Churches* may as well *reject* matters of this nature, though *once received*, as *refuſe* their *conſent* to their firſt *reception*.

ſin can *excuſe* from an otherwiſe valid *obligation*. If therefore the *firſt* reception of ſuch Decrees was not for the ſake of any ſuch *Council*, or any other ſuch *Foreign* Authority which might *oblige* particular Churches to *receive* them, but on account of ſuch Churches *judging* them ſuitable to their *own* Circumſtances: what ground can there be to imagin that *ſuch* a *reception* muſt diveſt them of their liberty *afterwards*? And ſeeing the *Circumſtances* are acknowledged to be *mutable*, in which ſuch Decrees were at firſt thought convenient, and ſo *far* mutable as that what was *convenient* in ſome circumſtances may be as *inconvenient* in others; how can the ſame Churches be charged with *levity* in changing their *opinion* concerning things which depend on ſo *changeable reaſons* of which they are acknowledged, by theſe Principles, to be at *firſt* the *competent Judges*?

Many of the *Gallicane* Reaſonings againſt the *Hugonots* will prove thoſe of their *own Communion* obliged in *Conſcience* to ſubmit their *Judgments* to *our Churches* in matters concerning our *own Juriſdiction*, whil'ſt they *live* within *our Juriſdictions*.

6. Beſides, the moſt that our Adverſaries ſay on ſeveral of their Decrees of this kind, is, that they are not ſufficient to excuſe a *breach* of Communion in Perſons who are not concerned to *judg* of *Publick Conſtitutions*, but to *ſubmit* to the judgment of thoſe who are the *competent Judges*, whileſt they live within their Juriſdictions. This might poſſibly have concerned the *Hugonots* whileſt they lived in their Juriſdictions, if they had not otherwiſe deprived themſelves of their otherwiſe Lawful Power within their *own Juriſdictions* by their Innovations in the common *Faith*. But what is it to us, who are no *Subjects* of their *Juriſdictions*; nor therefore under any higher Obligations to ſubmit to *their* Judgments in matters of this nature than they are to ſubmit to *ours*? Rather on the contrary the ſame Reaſoning will make *for* us, and *againſt* themſelves, if the Scene be changed from *France* to *England*. Have they the *Churches* and as Lawful uninterrupted *Succeſſion* in *France*? And have not we the ſame in *England*? Have the *Hugonots* failed there in the like Succeſſion of a *Proteſtant Epiſcopacy*, which might give them the reputation of a *Church* in contra-diſtinction to the *Romaniſts*, according to St. *Cyprian*'s notion that makes *Epiſcopacy* Eſſential to the *notion* of a true *Church*? And have not the *Romaniſts* likewiſe failed *here* of the like uninterrupted *Succeſſion* of *Epiſcopal* Government? for what can a foreign *Titular*, now and then ſent hither by a foreign *Authority*, do to conſtitute an uninterrupted *Succeſſion* of a *Church* in *England*? Are the *Hugonots* for thoſe reaſons, of living in their

Juriſdi-

Juriſdictions, and of wanting what might give them the face of a *Church* in oppoſition to the *Romaniſts*, to be reckoned as in *Conſcience* liable to their determinations? and are not the *Romaniſts* in our *Juriſdictions*, on the ſame accounts, to be reckoned as the ſame way liable to our determinations in things *indifferent*, and confeſſedly depending on the *Authority* of *particular Churches*? Are the *Hugonots* Schiſmatical in *France* for not complying with the determinations of the *Gallicane Churches* in things, however *inconvenient*, yet confeſſedly *not ſinful*? And will not the *Romaniſts* be on the ſame account *Schiſmatical* for the like diſobedience in *England*?

7. The rather ſo, becauſe *themſelves* can pretend no *reaſon* that can *oblige* another *Church* to be of their minds, which can challenge as juſt an *Authority* as themſelves can for *judging* within her *own* Juriſdiction. For if they can but lay aſide the prejudice they have received from the *reverence* they have for their Churches *Judgment* in matters of this nature, ſo as to be able to judg impartially; though they may think the general preſumption which ought to be on the ſide, and in favour of *Authority* ſufficient to countervail the more appearing Reaſonings of *Subjects*, yet certainly they cannot think their own determinations more reaſonable in *themſelves* if they were to be oppoſed to the contrary determinations of an equally-competent *Judg*, and an equally-lawful *Authority*. For can any Perſon in his ſenſes think that Prayers in an *unknown* Tongue are of themſelves more *edifying* than ſuch as are commonly *underſtood*? or that what is leſs *edifying* is fitter for *publick* uſe than that which more conduces to *publick edification*? Can any think it fit that a ſtanding *Law* ſhould be made and impoſed on *all* Churches that *both* Symbols muſt never more be given to the *Laity* but in *rarely occurring* Caſes, and by particular *Diſpenſations*; when it is manifeſt that it was otherwiſe adminiſtred by our *Saviour* and his *Apoſtles*, otherwiſe by the *Catholick Church* for, at leaſt, a thouſand years, that the diſtribution was ordinarily in *both kinds*, and if any did receive it otherwiſe, that this was then the *rare Caſe*, and provided for in the particular exigency by a rarely-occurring *Diſpenſation*? This is, I am ſure, the utmoſt that the Biſhop of *Meaux*, that any of our Adverſaries, can ſay, with any colour, for their own Practice. But can they think that *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* did not fit their *general Practice*

The *deciſions* of the *Romaniſts* in matters of this *nature* are in themſelves ſo *unreaſonable*, as that (abſtracting from the Authority by which they are impoſed) themſelves can pretend no *reaſon* that can *oblige* another *Church* which is as competent a *Judg* of them as theirs is, to be of their *Churches mind*.

ctice in affairs of this nature to *general Circumſtances?* Can they think that mutable Circumſtances can ſo alter at *one* time, that what was then, conſidering Circumſtances, *generally* convenient, may now be as *generally* inconvenient on the conſpiring *general* change of *Circumſtances?* Can they tell, in particular, what thoſe *Circumſtances* are which may make it *now* unfit for the *Laity* to Communicate in both kinds, which were not alſo *then*, and which would not have proved this Communion in both kinds as inconvenient *then* as *now*, proceeding on their Principles? They cannot ſay but that their Doctrines of *Tranſubſtantiation* and *Concomitancy* (if they be true at all) were as true *then* as they are *now*. They cannot ſay but that it was *then*, at leaſt, *as* fit as *now*, to preſerve that reſpect which was due to the *Sacerdotal Office* by theſe *diſtances*, even in *Communion*. They know very well that theſe diſtances were *actually* obſerved, and that the *Clergy* had then ſuch honours in *Communicating* above the *Laity*, that it was then accounted a ſevere puniſhment in the Diſcipline of thoſe Ages for a *Clergyman* to be degraded to the *Communion* of a *Laick*. They cannot but know that this diſtinction might *then*, as well as *now*, have been made by this *appropriating* of the *Cup* to the *Clergy*; and may *now* as well as *then*, be maintained by other honours in *Communicating* without any ſuch *appropriation*. What therefore can this *change* of *Circumſtances* mean but their belief of theſe new *Doctrines* which were not *then* believed? And how manifeſt preſumption muſt therefore lye againſt them on our Churches ſide, that ſhe continues the *Practice* as it has been delivered to her by ſuch unqueſtionable Authority, and does not preſume as they do, to change her *Practice*, on the more uncertain *Reaſonings*, and *Inferences*, of *later Ages?*

Suppoſing the *Authority* of both *Churches* otherwiſe *equal*; yet *our Churches* have ſeveral other *collateral advantages* above *theirs*, even in point of *Authority*.

8. Thus it appears that, *abſtracting* from the *Authorities*, or ſuppoſing them *equal* on both ſides; yet the determinations of *our* Church, in theſe particulars at leaſt, muſt be, even by themſelves, judged moſt prudent. So that where the *Authorities* are *equal*, there can be nothing pretended, even by our Adverſaries, why any ſhould leave *our* Churches determinations, and adhere to *theirs*, on account of the *intrinſick* reaſonableneſs of the determinations themſelves. And yet ſuppoſing the *Authorities* otherwiſe *equal*, we have notwithſtanding this advantage over *our* Adverſaries, that *our Authority* requires obedience only where, even

even on *equal* terms, ſhe has more *reaſon* to expect it, from her *own Subjects*, and within her *own Juriſdictions*; but *their Church* extends her commands, where ſhe has *no* Authority at all, over *others Subjects*, and in *other Juriſdictions*. But I add further, that moſt of our other determinations are undoubtedly more *ſafe*, and therefore more *eligible* by *Subjects* where they are ſuppoſed to be at their *choice*, which muſt be their caſe when we ſuppoſe two different determinations, otherwiſe equally *indifferent* in their *own nature*, and equally *determined* by a *lawful Authority*. For ſuppoſe they could with all their artifices clear ſeveral Practices of their Church from *Sin*, yet they can never prove them ſo *ſafe* as ours. It is certainly *lawful* to worſhip God *alone* as the *Primitive Church* did without *Images*. It is *lawful*, at leaſt, as they did, to mention no other Interceſſor in our *Publick* Prayers than *Chriſt alone* who has *undoubtedly* the office of interceding for us. Theſe are undoubted *Practices* of the *Primitive Church* for ſeveral Ages. But that the *oppoſite Practices* are ſo *lawful*, ſo far removed from *danger* of *Sin*, even our Adverſaries themſelves cannot think if they will conſider and reflect. We certainly keep cloſer to the *Primitive Traditions*, when together with their *Opinions* we retain their *Practices*, alſo than when, upon preſumption of our own skill in judging *conſequences*, we venture in confidence of *Conſequences* drawn from their *Opinions*, to innovate their *Practices*. We are certainly as *ſafe* in our ſimplicity, as thoſe *Primitive Ages*, who were as *ſimple* as we are. But our Adverſaries are liable to a hazard wherein we are not concerned, I mean the wickedneſſes they muſt be charged with if they ſhould prove *miſtaken* in their Reaſonings, their being certainly guilty of the violation of *Church-Communion*, which follows on their *impoſing* their own ſentiments in matters of that nature, not now to mention the proper charge of *Idolatry*.

The Biſhop of *Meaux*'s Reaſonings do not with the leaſt Probability ſhew that *other Churches* are obliged to be of *their Churches* mind, as far as concerns their own *Juriſdictions*.

9. Thus it appears that by *Gallicane* Principles, all their Reaſonings of this kind againſt the *Hugonots* in *France*, return upon their Brethren of their own Communion in *England*. So far they are from being *adapted* to the nature of their Diſputes in *England*. Suppoſe they had been ſucceſsful in purging their *Invocation* of *Saints*, their *Prayers* for departed Souls in *Purgatory*, their Practice of *Indulgences*, their *Private Maſſes*, their *Prayers* in an *unknown Tongue*, their Communicating the *Laicks* in *one* only *kind*, their *prohibiting* the uſe of the *Scriptures* to the *Laity*,

&c. from all Imputations of *Sin* and *unlawfulneſs*; All this will only prove the *Subjects* of their own *Juriſdictions* obliged to *acquieſce* in their reſpective determinations, and not to *ſeparate* from them for Impoſitions of this *nature*; and that ſuch *Separations* from them for matters of this *nature* would be *Schiſmatical*, and deprive ſuch Separaters of a Right of *Catholick Communion*, if ſuch Churches had not, on *other* accounts, *cut* themſelves from the *Catholick Church* by innovating in the *Catholick Faith*, and breaking the terms of *Catholick correſpondence* by impoſing on the Liberties of *other Churches* not obnoxious to them. But bare *Lawfulneſs* of them will not ſuffice to prove *other* Churches *obliged* to impoſe them within their *own Juriſdictions*. Nor can it ſuffice to prove the *diſuſe* of theſe things *unlawful* where ſuch *diſuſe* is alſo allowed by a *Lawful Authority* within its *own Juriſdiction*; nay where the *oppoſite uſes* are alſo *impoſed*, and impoſed by a *Lawful Authority* not exceeding its *own Juriſdiction*. Monſieur *de Meaux* does not ſo much as offer, nor pretend, any proof, that it is out of the Power of the Church to *forbear*, or even alſo to *forbid* any *Invocation* of *Saints*, any *Prayers* for *Souls* in *Purgatory*, or *Indulgences*, or *Private Maſſes*, &c. within her *own Juriſdiction*; at leaſt, to impoſe publick *Offices* that ſhould *require* no ſuch things. Such *Offices* muſt needs be as *lawful* now as *before* theſe Innovations were introduced; and being *Lawful*, muſt therefore (by their own *Principles*) oblige the *Subjects* of their *own Juriſdiction*, under pain of *Schiſm* and *Excluſion* from *Catholick Communion*. They would certainly think them *Schiſmaticks* that ſhould uſe a *Liturgy* in *France* forbidden by the *Church* of *France*, or uſe *Prayers* or other *Rites* or *Practices* forbidden by the *Governours* of the reſpective Juriſdictions, and not *eſſential* to *Liturgies*. They account it *Schiſmatical* in the *Hugonots* that they do not obſerve things of this nature impoſed in *France*. And how can they defend themſelves from the like Imputation of *SCHISM* for not obſerving our *Engliſh Liturgy* impoſed by the *Church* of *England*, whileſt they live within our *Engliſh* Juriſdiction? nay for *ſeparating* into a *diſtinct Communion*, and correſponding with a *Communion* that has *condemned*, and exerciſed open *hoſtility* againſt the *Communion* of the *Juriſdiction* they live in? How can they defend themſelves from the charge of being *Schiſmatical* for taking upon them to *judg* of the Decrees of the lawful Superiors of their own

own Jurisdiction, and actually *separating* from them, even tho the *things* imposed had *really* been *inconvenient*?

10. These manifest advantages we have against them, in their own new *Methods*, whilst the Dispute is confined to their Case that live within our own *Jurisdictions*, That *we* are not accountable to *them* for the *Prudence* of our *Ecclesiastical Constitutions*, but that their *own* Notions of *Ecclesiastical Authority*, and much more the Notions of the *Primitive Catholick Church*, do make *them* accountable to *Us*, for breaking *Peace* with *us* for them, how *imprudent* soever they could prove them, if they cannot also prove them *Sinful* and *Unlawful*, and *Sinful* as well for *Subjects* to *Practice*, as for *Superiors* to *impose*; for it is only this latter way of stating the Question, that can reach the Case of *separating Subjects*. And in this way of proceeding, the *Charge* and *Proof* will wholly lye on *their* side, which they have hitherto endeavoured to fasten on *us*. They are obliged to *produce* their Reasons for separating from *us*. And they are to take care that the *Reasons* produced be *sufficient* to justifie their *Separation*, and that the *Charges* they produce be not against particular *Doctors* of our Communion, but against our *Churches* themselves, and our *Communion*: And it will be *they*, not *we*, that must be responsible for any *Misapprehension* or *Misrepresentation* of our *Church*'s Doctrine in the *Particulars* wherewith they charge her. Which things I warn only to let them see the *Insufficiency* of their new celebrated *Methods*, and withal their *Imprudence* in applying what might have been urged, not with more *force*, but at least with more *Plausibility*, by the Bishop of *Meaux* in *France*, which loses even its *Plausibility* also, and returns upon themselves when applied to our Circumstances here in *England*. But if they will needs have us to take upon us to be the *Aggressors*, and to *charge* their Church with Imputations sufficient to justifie our *not Communicating* with them; even this our *Cause* is very well able to account for, by the Doctrine of the following short Discourse concerning the *Fundamental Principle* of *Popery*, as a *distinct* and *opposite Communion*. Tho neither Matters of *Discipline*, nor even *Doctrinal* Errors in matters of *lesser* importance, be sufficient to justifie a *withdrawing* from *Communion* of otherwise *Lawful Superiors*; yet even themselves cannot deny but that Innovations in matters of *Faith* are sufficient for it, nor can they here complain of the least *Misrepresentation*. They cannot deny but

In this way of stating the Question, the *Romanists* are obliged to be the *Aggressors*, and to take care that they do not *Misrepresent* our *Churches* Doctrine.

If we must needs be the *Aggressors*, we can justly charge the *Romanists* with their Innovations in matters of *Faith*, without any colourable *pretence* of *misrepresenting*.

but that it is *unlawful* to *Communicate* with *Hereticks*. They cannot deny but that even *Subjects* may withdraw their Communion if ever the Bishop of the *Jurisdiction* should teach or impose *Heresie*, as a condition of his *Communion*; so that this will justifie our *Non-Communion* with them, tho we had otherwise been obliged to as much *Subjection* to them as themselves pretend. Much less can they deny but that *Bishops* may do it who are otherwise *lawfully* invested with *Episcopal Powers*. They cannot deny but that *Bishops* may do it, without *Councils*, as well as *in* them, as all the *Heresies* were condemned that broke out in the first three Centuries. They cannot deny but that *private Bishops* of the *Jurisdictions* where *Heresies* first rose, took upon them *Authoritatively* to condemn the *Heresies* as well as the *Hereticks* of their own Jurisdictions, and by their *Encyclical Epistles* looked on all *other Bishops* in the World obliged to ratify such censures, even *antecedently* to any *Conciliary* Determinations. So *Alexander* of *Alexandria* condemned the *Arian* Heresie; not only *before* the *Council* of *Nice*, but also before the *Bishop* of *Rome*, was either consulted, or had so much as heard what the Heresie was that was so condemned by him, which notwithstanding he seconded with his *Encyclical Epistles*, expecting and requiring their ratification of his Censure, upon the Reasons there produced by him for it. They cannot deny but that *succeeding Bishops* have justly rejected *Heresies*, that had before been received by their *Predecessors* in the same Sees. This was plainly the avowed practice of all the *Catholick Successors* of the many *Bishops* that professed *Arianism* in the days of *Constantius* and *Valens*, and of all the Patrons of *Images* who rescinded all the determinations of their *Predecessors* of the preceding Reigns, even that *Conciliary* one of *Constantinople*, who are notwithstanding commended for it by our Adversaries. *Our Bishops* therefore are not to be prejudged for *rejecting* their new determinations of *Faith*, notwithstanding that they had indeed been received by their immediate *Romish Predecessors*. What is it therefore in this charge wherein they can pretend any *Misrepresentation?* They *will* not say that their *Church* her *self* is not concerned to answer for her Impositions in matters pretended to be of *Faith*, and as *Conditions* of *Catholick Communion*. They *dare* not say but that the Particulars we charge them with, as *Transubstantiation*, *Purgatory*, the approbation of their

their known Practices of *Worshipping Saints* and *Images* in the *Sense* pretended by themselves, with Multitudes of other Instances, are *imposed* by their *Church*, as matters of *Faith*, and *Conditions*, at least, of that *Communion*, to which they appropriate the *name* of *Catholick*. It is notorious that they *Excommunicate* and *Anathematize* and *Burn* for them, and exercise all those *Rigours* on Dissenters in particulars of this kind, which the Powers that execute their Discipline, are wont to reckon among the proper *Punishments* of *Hereticks*. And this is withal another Fundamental defect in Monsieur *de Meaux*'s Undertaking: He has indeed endeavoured to sweeten and excuse them as *tolerable*, and perhaps *undangerous* Propositions; but has not offered one Argument to vindicate them as *Imposition*, as Impositions on other *Churches* of *equal* Authority with their own, as *Additions* to our common *Faith*, and as *Conditions* of their pretended *Catholick Communion*. And yet without performing this, all he says cannot possibly suffice to vindicate his *own*, as a *distinct* Communion by it self, and particularly as *refusing* Communion with *our Churches*, which is the Case of which I am at present discoursing.

11. I have withal shewn that their pretensions to *define* new matters of *Faith* Authoritatively, and *independently* on the *Evidence* produced to prove them such, so as to oblige others who are unsatisfied with that *Evidence*, is, and can alone be rationally challenged by them on account of their pretended claim to an *Infallibility* of *Judgment*; and, that their claim to such *Infallibility*, (if any were possible to be claimed in this *Life*) must be ultimately resolved into their pretences to be the *Catholick Church*, even in opposition to the *Greek Churches* who have as regular a *Succession* as themselves, and withal a consent of a much greater *number* of *Apostolical Churches* than they can pretend to, which would have been more insisted on, and urged most strongly, this very Topick of *Apostolical Tradition*, in the Resonings of *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*, who first insisted on, and urged most strongly, this very Topick of *Apostolical Tradition*; And that their pretensions to the *name* and *Priviledges* of the *Catholick Church*, must likewise be resolved into their Notion of a *Catholick Church Virtual*, and their adhæsion to the *Pope* as a *Principle* of *Catholick Unity*, not acknowledged by the *Greek* Churches. And neither here can they complain of any misrepresentation: For I have not only laid these Assertions to their *charge*, but have

The charging them as obliged to defend their claim to *Infallibility*, and the *Pope*, as a *Principle of Unity*, not liable to any pretence of *Misrepresenting* them.

have also *proved* that they are *obliged* to own them, from the *natures* of the *things* themselves, and the *exigency* of their *Cause*. Let them therefore choose whether part they please themselves. If they will *disserve* their *Cause*, and *disown* these *Assertions*, however necessary to support it, only to gain the conceived advantage of charging *Me* with new *Misrepresentations*; then I shall beseech them to consider, how they can possibly defend their *refusing* to *Communicate* with *our Churches*. But if they will rather gratifie their *Cause* than their *humour*; they will then find their modern artifices fail them here, of complaining of *Misrepresentations*.

The mischievous consequences of *false* pretensions to *Infallibility*.

12. The God of Peace *allay* the *heats*, and *destroy* the *dividing Principles* of Christendom, among which perhaps there are no *Principles* more malignant than *false* pretences to *Infallibility*. This has made them define things upon very unsufficient evidence when they have fancied themselves intitled to a *greater Infallibility* in their *Conclusions* than their *Premises* could rationally account for. And this makes it impossible for them to recede, in Ages of *Learning* and more exact *knowledg* of the *Originals* of *Tradition*, from the decrees of very *wicked*, and withal very *unskilful* Ages, and that in instances so very *gross* and *manifest* as hardly any thing could hinder them from *seeing* and *acknowledging* but strong *prejudices* to the contrary of a *Judicial Infallibility* in those who introduced them. Whilest such *Opinions* as these prevail and are received, in vain can any one expect any *candor* in *acknowledging* the most pregnant *Convictions* from them who are possessed by them; in vain does any one offer sufficient *reasons* for *Conviction* to Persons already *resolved* and *prejudged* against *Conviction*; in vain can such Persons expect any *illumination* or *assistance* from *God* who are not disposed to *receive the Truth in the love of it*. And therefore the *opposing* and *convicting* of Errors so *mischievous* and *embroiling*, and so *incurable* in Persons resolved to stand by them, will deserve the utmost *zeal* and *diligence* of all true *Lovers* of *Souls*, and all hearty *well-wishers* to *Catholick Communion*, and the *Peace* of *Christendom*.

A Positive

ACCOUNT

OF THE

FUNDAMENTAL CONTROVERSY

ON WHICH

Depend all other Disputes, betwixt the *Romanists* and the other *Communions* of *Christendom*. With a short discovery of the little evidence they have on the *Roman* side in this Controversie.

BY the *Fundamental Controversie*, I mean that on which the particular Controversies do depend, and wherein what is maintained by the *Church* of *Rome*, does so nearly concern her, that the whole subsistence as a *distinct Communion*, must adæquately depend on the Truth or Falshood of it. And her Assertion herein is that *Fundamental Principle*, the confutation of which is alone sufficient for convicting her of the *guilt* of that Separation of Communion, which has been caused by her unwarrantable Impositions in the particular Disputes, and for excusing all others who have permitted themselves to be excluded from her Communion rather than they would profess the belief of Errors, which was required as a Condition of their Communion. So that the Confutation of this *Fundamental Principle* does virtually and consequentially contain a resolution of all other particular Controversies debated between us.

For finding out this *Fundamental Principle*, I ſuppoſe,

Suppoſitions. 1. That the firſt *Formal Separation* (I will not yet ſay *Schiſm*, for that implies a fault in it, which is to appear from what follows) was made by the *Romaniſts*, at leaſt as to us in *England*, with whom they communicated in the ſame Publick Offices, till they ſeparated themſelves upon the Prohibition of * *Pius* V.

* Feb. 25. 1569.

2. That this *Formal Separation* without ſufficient *poſitive Grounds* for it (though there were no ſufficient *convictive Grounds* to the contrary) is the Sin of *Formal Schiſm*; which is as properly incurred, if the Separation be *unneceſſary*, as if it be *unreaſonable*; if it be *without*, as if it be *againſt* reaſon.

3. This being ſuppoſed, for our Juſtification, who were only *paſſive* in the *Separation*; it is not requiſite that we *confute* their pretences, but it is abundantly ſufficient that the *proofs* produced by them are not *directly concluſive* to their purpoſe.

4. This *purely negative* way of proceeding, that they want ſufficient ground to juſtifie their Practice, being alone ſufficient for our purgation, the proof that the grounds of their ſeparating from us were ſufficient (which is their *poſitive Aſſertion*) will be incumbent on our Adverſaries, and we cannot be obliged to diſprove them.

5. This obligation to *Prove*, is incumbent on them, not only as they are the *firſt Separaters* (which may only concern us of the *Engliſh Communion*) but alſo as the *Impoſers* of their own Sentiments on others as Conditions of Catholick Communion. Which will alſo relate to *forreign Proteſtants*, who were driven from their Communion, being not ſuffered to continue in it but on ſuch Conditions.

6. Our Adverſaries being thus obliged to give a *Poſitive account* of their own proceedings; they have no way to juſtifie themſelves but by vindicating that on which themſelves lay the ſtreſs of their Separation (ſo that, if they fail here no other proof will be ſufficient for proving the neceſſity of it) which was noted to be meant by the *Fundamental Principle*.

Here therefore two things will be neceſſary to be ſhewn: 1. What this is on which they lay this ſtreſs: 2. That it is no way juſtifiable.

Propoſitions. For the Firſt, it is clear, 1. That the particular Propoſitions debated betwixt us are not by themſelves thought neceſſary, to our Salvation, *neceſſitate medii*, ſo as that our Ignorance or diſ-

belief

belief of them ſhould deprive us of ſome neceſſary Truth, without which we cannot be ſaved. For they themſelves excuſe ſuch as did disbelieve them, as we do, before the definition of their Church.

2. That, even ſuppoſing we were erroneous in things not thus neceſſary, yet this were not ſufficient to juſtifie their Separation or Impoſition on *intrinſick accounts*; that is, an Error of ſo ſmall importance, as to the value of the thing, could not in that regard, of its *intrinſick value*, excuſe either their *Separation* from us becauſe we hold it, or their ſo rigorous *Impoſition* of their own ſentiments on us concerning it.

3. That as there is no *Intrinſick Neceſſity* of the Truth of the Propoſitions for our Salvation, ſo neither, 1. Is there that *Extrinſick Evidence* of their being revealed by the Apoſtles that muſt neceſſarily argue, in him that ſhould deny them, an *Irreverence* and *Obſtinacy* againſt the *Divine Veracity*, on which their Credibility depends. This alſo appears from their excuſing the Errors of the Ancients, who if they had had ſuch Evidence in their times, could not have been inculpably Erroneous. Which they take up from what St. *Auguſtin* had ſaid to that purpoſe, in his Diſputes with the *Donatiſts* concerning the Caſe of St. *Cyprian*, whom he therefore makes more excuſable in the ſame Error of *Rebaptizing Hereticks* than the *Donatiſts*, becauſe he lived *before*, but they *after*, the *Nicene* deciſion of that whole Diſpute. Nor, 2. Do themſelves pretend that any Error, which may not be preſumed *obſtinately perſiſted in*, is ſufficient to juſtifie a Separation from the Communion of Perſons ſo Erroneous.

4. Hence it follows, that ſeeing neither the *Intrinſick Neceſſity* of the Propoſitions themſelves, nor their *Extrinſick Evidence* Antecedently to the definition of the *Church*, are, on their own Principles, ſufficient to juſtifie the Severity of their proceedings againſt us: The only thing they have more to alledg for it muſt be our *Diſobedience* in disbelieving thoſe Propoſitions notwithſtanding the *Authority* which their *Church* has given them by her Definition.

5. That the *Obedience* required to theſe Propoſitions is not only *not to make Parties* and *Diviſions* in the *Church* againſt them (ſuch as our Church is generally thought to require to the XXXIX. Articles) but alſo *Poſitively to believe them*, not only as *Truths*, but alſo as *matters of Faith*.

6. That this *Positive Belief* of their Churches Definitions exteriorly professed in joyning in their Offices, and in abstaining from the Communion even of *Peaceable Dissenters*, and censuring them as *Hereticks*, cannot *veraciously*, nor consequently without *Sin*, be performed without an *Internal Assent*.

7. That this *Internal Assent* cannot safely be given without a *satisfactory conviction* of the *Truth* of the Propositions so assented to.

8. And therefore, that such an Assent may be given to Propositions defined by their Church, only on account of her Authority, it is requisite that her *Authority* be such a *Medium* as may assure us of the *Truth* of those Propositions.

9. This *Assurance* (if it be not according to the Doctrine of their greatest Pretenders to Reason, *Mathematical*, yet) must, at least for *matters of Faith* (and such these Definitions are by themselves esteemed) be *Moral*, that is, such as may exclude all *Probability*, if not all *Possibility*, of *Doubting*, whether they be *True*.

10. That *Authority*, which, upon its *own account*, may be an Argument to convince us of the Truth of her Definitions, must not be such as must depend on the use of *Means*: Both, 1. because that will leave a Liberty for such as are competent Judges of them to have recourse from such *Authority* to the *Means themselves* on which such her Credibility will depend, which the *Romanists* will by no means permit: And, 2. because the *Means* are by themselves acknowledged *frequently Fallible*, and the *Infallibility* only affixed to the *Conclusions*.

11. That *Authority* which may assure us of the *Truth* of its Definitions, independently on the *Means*, must needs be *Infallible* in its *Judgment*. Which though some few late Authors have endeavoured to avoid, yet the Generality of them have found themselves in pursuance of the former Principles, obliged to assert it.

12. This *Infallibility* of *Judgment*, surpassing the use of *Ordinary Means*, must needs be *Supernatural* and *Extraordinary*; and therefore as to the *light* by which it judges, it must be assisted by *new Revelations*, though it be conversant about no *newly-Revealed Objects*.

13. This *Infallibility* is by them challenged to themselves by virtue of those Promises of the *Spirit* in the Scriptures, which themselves confess to belong only to the *Catholick Church*, not to any one particular Denomination of *Christians*.

14. That

14. That therefore their *Title* to this *Infallibility* muſt, according to their own Principles, be reſolved into thoſe Proofs whereby they make out their Title of being the *Catholick Church*.

15. They themſelves do not, nor cannot, pretend to be the *Catholick Church diffuſive*; that is, that all the *Regular, Legal, Original Succeſſors* to the Apoſtles in all *Apoſtolical Sees* (moſt of which they cannot deny to have been in the Oriental parts) have ever ſubmitted to their Authority, or are united to them in external viſible Communion. Nay, they have condemned a much greater number of *Apoſtolical Sees* than they have among themſelves.

16. That therefore the Notion of *Catholick*, to which they may with any colour pretend, muſt be ſo limited as that it may agree to a *Party of Chriſtians* in oppoſition to others.

17. That though it may indeed be true, admitting an *Appeal* to the *Primitive Records*, that a *particular Church* may hold all that which was *originally* taught by the *Catholick Church diffuſive*, without any novel abuſive Impoſitions that may oblige any Conſcientious Perſons to keep off from her Communion, and ſo by *accident* may deſerve the name of *Catholick*, as that name diſtinguiſhes from other Chriſtian Societies of *Hereticks* and *Schiſmaticks*. Yet ſpeaking of ſuch an Authority as they own in the *Roman Church*, which may preſcribe againſt ſuch *Appeals*, ſo that its own only ſenſe is to be *preſumed* to be the Senſe of the *Catholick Church*, without particular convincing Evidences of the concurrence of all in the Primitive Ages with them, this plainly requires that this Notion of *Catholick* be certainly *fixed*, and fixed to a *particular Judicatory*, and this Antecedently to a trial by the *Primitive Records*. For this *preſcribing againſt* an *Appeal* ſo rational as to the nature of the thing, muſt plainly imply an *obliging Juriſdiction*, Antecedently to, and therefore Independently on, that trial. And *Juriſdiction* can ſignifie nothing unleſs the Judicatory to whom it belongs, be alſo notorious, and notorious alſo Antecedently to the ſame trial. So that in this way of proceeding it muſt neceſſarily be ſuppoſed that *one certain part* of the *Catholick Church* can never *ceaſe* to be *Catholick*, nor to have a *Juriſdiction* over the *Catholick Church diffuſive*.

18. Theſe things cannot be aſcertained to a *particular Church*, ſo as to preſcribe againſt the now-mentioned way of trying it, without maintaining the Notion of a *Catholick Church Virtual*.

That

That is, we cannot be aſſured that a *particular Church* muſt neceſſarily be *Catholick*, Antecedently to the trial of its *Catholiciſm* by a recourſe to the *Primitive Records*, but by being firſt aſſured that that particular Church ſhall never fail of being *Catholick* it ſelf, and that all other *particular Churches* muſt approve of their *Catholiciſm* by their conformity to that which can never be otherwiſe. So that on theſe terms the knowledg of that one Church, and what is maintained by her, will be *virtually* a knowledg of the *Catholick Church diffuſive*, and what ought to be maintained by them. Which things put altogether, do plainly make up that which our Adverſaries mean when they ſpeak of a *Catholick Church virtual*.

19. This Notion of a *Catholick Church virtual*, which may agree to *one part* of the *Catholick Church diffuſive* in contradiſtinction to all others, muſt imply ſuch a *Principle* of *Unity* to which all the reſt are *obliged*, though that one part only do *actually adhere* to it.

20. This *Principle of Unity* muſt not only be a Principle of *Order*, but of *Influence*. For it is only by virtue of this *Influence* of this one Church over all others that we can conclude that all others are obliged to be like it; and it is only on this obligation of all other Churches to be like her that her Title to the name of the *Catholick Church Virtual* is adæquately grounded.

21. This *Principle of Unity* muſt be in the *Governours* of ſuch a particular Church. For our Adverſaries will not have the *Promiſes* of the *Spirit* made to the *People*, but to their *Governours*. So that the *People* can have no further Right in them, but on condition of *adhering* to their *Governours*, who therefore muſt be the *firſt Principle* of *Unity*.

22. This *Principle of Unity* muſt not *depend* on the *Authority* of the *Church diffuſive*. Otherwiſe that ſame *Authority* of the *Church diffuſive* might *recall* it, in which Caſe the adhering to it would not prove a certain Note of *Catholiciſm*.

23. To apply therefore all this to the *Romaniſts*, their whole pretence of being the *Catholick Church* is adæquately grounded in that Notion of *a Catholick Church virtual*, whereby they confine it to *that Multitude of Chriſtians who are united under a viſible Monarchical Head as a Principle of their Unity, to which*, Jure Divino, *all are bound to be obedient*.

24. This *Monarchical Head* to which they pretend a nearer intereſt than others, is the *Papacy*.

The Summary.

Seeing therefore that nothing elſe can excuſe their new *Impoſitions* but the * *Authority* by which they are *Impoſed:* And *Seeing* that no *Authority* can be ſufficient for their purpoſe to oblige their Subjects † *internally* to *believe* what is neither ‖ *Neceſſary* as to its *matter*, nor * *Evident* as to its *proof*, Antecedently to the Definition of ſuch an *Authority*, but one that muſt be (*a*) *Infallible: Seeing* that they who do not in *terms* pretend the *Popes Infallibility* neceſſary (and they who do ſo, already own what I would prove that all muſt own according to their Principles) can make no Plea to *Infallibility*, but from thoſe (*b*) *Promiſes* of the *Spirit* which themſelves confeſs to have been primarily made to the *Catholick Church*; and therefore though an *Infallibility*, even in *Judgment*, were granted to belong to the *Catholick Church*, yet that can ſignifie nothing to our Adverſaries purpoſe till they can prove (*c*) themſelves to be that *Catholick Church* to which alone thoſe *Promiſes* confeſſedly belong: *Seeing* evidently they are not the (*d*) *Catholick Church diffuſive*, and can therefore only pretend to the Title of their being the *Catholick Church* (*e*) *Virtual: Seeing* this Notion of the *Catholick Church Virtual* muſt neceſſarily imply ſuch a (*f*) *Principle of Unity* to which all the *Catholick Church diffuſive* is obliged to adhere, as to a certain *Standard* of their *Catholiciſm*; and this *Principle of Unity*, to which they can lay claim above other *Chriſtian Societies*, is only the (*g*) *Papacy*; and the *Papacy*, as a *Principle* of *Unity*, muſt be a *Principle*, not of *Order* (*h*) only, but of *Influence*; and that independently (*i*) on the Judgment of the *Catholick Church diffuſive:* All theſe things being conſidered together, It will plainly follow, that, if this *influential independent power* of the *Papacy* cannot be proved, all their pretences to *Infallibility*, or even to any *Authority* for deciding theſe Controverſies between us, muſt fall to the ground; and conſequently all their *particular Deciſions* depending on them will neither be *valid* in *Law*, nor *obliging* in *Conſcience*, which will leave their *Separation* and *Impoſitions* deſtitute of any pretence that may excuſe them from being *Schiſmatical*.

This is therefore the *Fundamental Principle* on which all their Authority in defining all other particular Doctrines muſt originally depend: And to ſhew that this Principle is inſufficiently proved, will alone be enough to invalidate all their other Definitions.

* Prop. 1, 2, 3, 4.
† Prop. 6.
‖ Prop. 1, 2.
* Prop 3.
(*a*) Prop 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.
(*b*) Prop. 13.
(*c*) Prop. 14.
(*d*) Prop. 15.
(*e*) Prop. 16, 17, 18.
(*f*) Prop 19.
(*g*) Prop. 21, 23, 24.
(*h*) Prop. 20.
(*i*) Prop. 22.

Secondly,

Secondly, Therefore *to ſhew the inſufficiency of their proof of it.* This Proof muſt either be from *Tradition.* And for this it is obſervable that,

I. This Notion of the *Catholick Church Virtual*, if it had been *True*, muſt have been originally delivered by the unanimous conſent of the *Catholick Church diffuſive.* We cannot judg otherwiſe unleſs we ſuppoſe a great defect, either of the *Apoſtles*, in *not teaching*, or of the *Church*, in *not preſerving* the memorial of ſuch a *Fundamental Principle* of their *Unity.*

II. This Topick, of *Tradition* delivered down by the *Catholick Church diffuſive*, is the only proper one for the Church who pretends to this Authority to prove it by. And till it be *proved*, and proved to the *judgment* of *particular Subjects*, there is no reaſon that ſhe ſhould expect that they ſhould think themſelves *obliged* in *Conſcience* to ſubmit to her Authority. For *Authority* can be no *rational Motive* to them to diſtruſt their own Judgments, till it ſelf be firſt *proved* and *acknowledged.* And therefore if it do not *appear*, and appear *to us* from this Topick, *we* can have no reaſon to believe it.

III. This Notion of the *Catholick Church Virtual* does not appear to have been ever delivered as the ſenſe of the *Catholick Church diffuſive :*

1. Not of that *Catholick Church diffuſive* which was extant in the *beginning* of the *Reformation.* For then,
   1. The *Greeks*, and moſt of the *Eaſtern Chriſtians* profeſſedly oppoſe it.
   2. Many of the *Weſtern Chriſtians* themſelves, eſpecially of the *French* and *Germans*, did not believe it.
   3. The *Weſtern Church* it ſelf *Repreſentative*, in four, by them reputed *General*, *Councils* of *Piſa*, *Conſtance*, *Siena*, and *Baſil*, did not own the Popes Supremacy as a *Principle* of *Catholick Unity*, but expreſly by their *Canons* declared themſelves to be his *Superiors*, and treated him as being wholly ſubject to their Authority. This was not long before the Reformation, and what they did had not then been repealed by any Authority comparable to theirs.
2. Not of the *Catholick diffuſive Church* in *ancienter times.*
   1. Not of the *Greeks* ever ſince their *Schiſm*, as the *Latins* call it, under *Photius.*

2. Before

2. Before that time, even whilſt they were united with the *Latines*, the *Popes Supremacy* was diſowned by them in that famous 28. *Canon* of *Chalcedon*, which equalled the Biſhop of *Conſtantinople* with him of *Rome*, and owned only an *Eccleſiaſtical Right* in both of them for the dignity of their Cities (which, as I have already † † warned, will not ſuffice for our Adverſaries purpoſe) that I may not now mention the *Canon* of *Conſtantinople* ſo expounded by the Fathers of *Chalcedon* in place, and maintained by the *Greek* Emperors. It was alſo diſowned by the *Council* of *Antioch* againſt *Julius*; Diſowned by the *African Fathers*, by whom the only Plea the Popes had from the *Council* of *Nice*, was found to be a forgery. *Prop.* 22.

3. Not of the *Catholick diffuſive Church* in thoſe *Primitive times*, while the *Chriſtians* lived under *Heathen Emperors*: For,
   1. The *Romaniſts* themſelves are unwilling to be tried by them, unleſs we will allow them to quote from the *Decretal Epiſtles*, &c. which Learned Men among themſelves do confeſs to be *ſuſpicious*, or *manifeſt Forgeries*.
   2. *Æneas Sylvius*, who was afterwards Pope *Pius* II. acknowledged that before the *Council* of *Nice* "little reſpect was had to the *Biſhop* of *Rome* above others." Ep. 188. ad Mart. Mayer.
   3. It appears by the freedom wherewith *Pope Stephen* was reſiſted by St. *Cyprian*, and *Pope Victor* by the *Aſiatick* Biſhops, and by St. *Irenæus*. And,
   4. By the *Canon* of *Carthage* under St. *Cyprian*, which declared that no Biſhop was ſubject to another, but that every one was Supreme in his own Charge under God; not now to mention other paſſages in him to the ſame. Ep. 72. ad Steph. fratr.
   5. By the weakneſs of the Teſtimonies alledged to this purpoſe, the *Preſidency in the Region of the* Romans *in Ignatius*, the *Powerful Principality* in St. *Irenæus*, the *Pontificatus Maximus* Ironically derided by *Tertullian*, and the *one Biſhop* and *one See* in St. *Cyprian*, &c.

(β) For the *Scriptures*, themſelves do not ſeem very confident of them without the Expoſitions of the *Fathers*.

A Diſcourſe concerning the Uſefulneſs of the foregoing Hypotheſis.

The CONTENTS.

THE Uſefulneſs *of the foregoing Method*, § I.

1. *For* reducing *all the Controverſies with the Church of* Rome, *into a* narrow *compaſs*, § II. *All are here reduced into this* one, *of the* Popes Supremacy *over the Catholick Church* diffuſive, § III. *The Deciſion of which* alone *does ſecure the* whole Duty *of ordinary* Laicks, *as to the whole Diſpute concerning the* true Communion, § IV. *and the* Evidence *by which it may be decided, is ſuch as is ſuitable to the* meaneſt *Capacity that may be ſuppoſed capable of acting* Prudently *in this great Affair*, § V. *The* Negative Argument *here made uſe of, that that is* not *to be taken for an Apoſtolical Tradition, which is not by certain Primitive-Writers aſcribed to the Apoſtles, is leſs queſtionable than the* Affirmative, *that a thing* is *to be taken for an Apoſtolical Tradition, becauſe it* has *by ſome Primitive Writers been aſcribed to the Apoſtles*, §. VI.

2. *Becauſe all* Reaſoning *with the* Romaniſts *on the* particular Diſputes *muſt needs be* uſeleſs *till this capital one concerning the* Fundamental Principle *be firſt reſolved*, §. VII. *Till then they cannot, by* Principles, *admit of any* Reaſonings *againſt the deciſions of their pretended Infallible Judg of Controverſies which may not be thought as* certain *to prove their Doctrine* falſe *as the deciſion of that* Judg *is to prove it* true, §. VIII. *But they cannot, with any* Principles, *avoid ſuch Reaſonings as are here inſiſted on, that are* antecedent *to the proof of the Infallibility of their Judg himſelf*, § IX.

3. *This Method will be particularly ſerviceable, for* retaining *thoſe in the Reformed Communion, who though they may be of the ſame* opinion *with the* Romaniſts *in ſome of the Particulars diſputed between us; yet can by no means come over to them in theſe* Fundamental Principles *of* Infallibility, §. X. *Or of the* Popes Supremacy, §. XI. *The fitneſs of this Method particularly to Perſons* not yet Proſelyted, §. XII. *The Doctrine of the Popes abſolute Monarchy is particularly* unacceptable *to Perſons not yet Proſelyted, and that not only on account of* Intereſt, *but of* Reaſon *alſo, as tending to make the Errors acknowledged by ſuch Perſons perfectly* unreformable, §. XIII. *Which yet, by this Method, will appear neceſſary to be accepted by them,*

§. XIV. *This Method will also on the other side serve for gaining those of the* Romish Communion *who deny the* Popes Infallibility, §. XV. *Or who maintain this Infallible Judg of Controversies to be either the Catholick Church* diffusive, *or a* Council *that is truly* Free *and* General, §. XVI. *Such cannot make out their own Title of being the* Catholick Church, §. XVII. *Nor can they, by* Principles, *avoid an* Obligation *to* separate *from the Communion of those who defend the* Infallibility *of the* Pope *and his Conclave, as* Heretical, *and Judicially* declared *Heretical by their* Judg *of* Controversies. §. XVIII.

4. *This Method may let* Peace-makers *see that their Endeavours ought rather to be laid out on these* Fundamental Principles *than the* particular Disputes *between our two Communions*, §. XIX. *Though the* particular Degrees *of the* Romanists *could be made* tolerable *by* Explication; *yet that were not sufficient to prove their* Communion lawful, §. XX. *And yet even this way of reconciling* particular Disputes *can never* reconcile *the* Communions *without a* reconciliation *in the* Fundamental Principles, §. XXI. *Their pretence to* Infallibility *is that which makes the* Roman *Communion* irreconcilable *with the* Reformation, §. XXII. *Which is here proved to depend on a Principle disowned by a considerable number of their* own *Communicants*, §. XXIII. *If the* Romanists *could be but once prevailed on to yield themselves to be* fallible, *there is great reason why they should review and again examine their own Decrees in the* Particulars *which divide* Communion, §. XXIV. *On supposition of such an impartial* review, *there is great reason to hope that they would* repeal *considerable numbers of their particular Decrees, perhaps enough to* reconcile *our two* Communions, §. XXV.

5. *This Method will serve for a Scheme of* Principles *to justifie the* Reformation, *for which some of our Adversaries have of late been so importunate. The Dean of St.* Pauls *Principles do resolve our common* Faith, *so far as we are* agreed, *independently on those Notions by which the* Romanists *appropriate* Infallibility *to their* own *Communion*, §. XXVI. *The* Principles *here proposed do justifie the* Reformation, *as to things wherein we are* divided, *and as we are* distinct Communions, §. XXVII.

6. *The* Method *here proposed is proved, as to* one *of the* Premises, *by considerable* Parties *of our Adversaries, who are in this matter,* divided *among* themselves, §. XXVIII. *The advantages we may gain to our main cause from these* divisions *of our Adversaries in matters of so great importance*, §. XXIX.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING THE USEFULNESS

Of the foregoing

Hypotheſis.

§. 1. THough I cannot undertake for what is mine in the *management* of the foregoing Diſcourſe; yet as to the *deſign* (for which I am wholly beholden to the *Goodneſs* of my *Cauſe*, and the intrinſick *reaſonableneſs* of the Evidences which prove it *good*) I think I may, without Immodeſty, affirm that, if it hold, it muſt be of univerſal uſe with them of the *Roman Communion*.

§. 2. For, 1. it muſt be of great uſe for the *Laity* and the *Vulgar*, who either have not the Abilities, or cannot ſpare the time, which would be requiſite for Enquiring into the particular Diſputes, to have the Controverſies reduc'd into a narrow compaſs. And eſpecially if theſe few things, to which they are reduced, may ſuffice for ſecuring the Duty incumbent on ſuch Perſons as well as if the Enquiry had been more minute; and when withal the Evidence, on which their Reſolution depends, is ſuited to the capacity of that ſort of perſons. Now all theſe things are provided for by the foregoing *Hypotheſis*. Uſe I.

§. 3. All

§. 3. *All the Diſputes between us are reduced to this one of the Popes Supremacy over the Catholick Church diffuſive.* As for our Differences in Other Particulars, it is here proved, that, if we be not miſtaken in This, themſelves either cannot charge us with *Error*, or not with any Error of that conſequence as may excuſe them, either for *Separating* from our Communion, or for that rigorous *Impoſing* their own Opinions which are contrary to it.

§. 4. *And this does indeed effectually ſecure the Duty of Ordinary Laicks in this whole affair.* For the Obligation incumbent at leaſt on ſuch Perſons who are not, by their particular Calling, obliged to Enquire, can only be to know ſo much as may ſecure their *Chriſtian Practice*; and that is ſufficiently ſecured by due adhering to that *Communion* where they may reaſonably expect the performance of thoſe Divine Promiſes which are conveyed in the uſe of the Sacraments, and the other Ordinary Means of Grace, ſo that the main concernment of ſuch Perſons is this, to know where ſuch a Communion is to be had. Now the ſolving of this Queſtion appears from the Principles here laid down, ſufficient to decide the whole Diſpute concerning the *true Communion*. If it ſhould prove *true* that the *Pope* has this Authority over the *Catholick Church Diffuſive*, it would follow that his *particular Church* muſt be the *Catholick Church Virtual*, and ſo muſt have a Title to all thoſe Promiſes made to the *Catholick Church* in the Scriptures (thus much at leaſt will follow, even according to their *Hypotheſis*, who do not pretend that theſe *Promiſes* reach ſo high as *Infallibility*) and therefore that they were obliged to ſubmit to *Active Obedience*, to all *Lawful Impoſitions*, and *Paſſive* even in *Unlawful* ones, ſo that in all Caſes it would be *Unlawful* to joyn with any other Communion in oppoſition to it. And on the other ſide, if it prove falſe, it will plainly follow that it is unlawful, either for thoſe who are already in that Communion to *continue* in it, ſeeing they cannot continue in it without being acceſſary to the *Diviſions* of *Chriſtendom* by abetting a *Tyrannical Power* over it; or for others to *deſert* their own Communion to come to the *Roman*, which cannot on thoſe Principles, be done with any ſuch pretence of *Neceſſity* as may excuſe their Separation from being *Schiſmatical*.

§. 5. *The Evidence alſo into which this Diſpute is ultimately reſolved, muſt needs be ſuch as muſt be ſuitable to the meaneſt capacity that is capable of acting prudently in this great affair*, (and certainly

every one is in *Intereſt*, as well as *Duty*, obliged to make uſe of his utmoſt *Prudence* in a matter wherein his greateſt Intereſts are ſo nearly concerned) For the meaneſt Prudence that is, will require that where they cannot chuſe their *way*, there at leaſt they ſhould chuſe their *Guide*. And it is only the *Authority* of the *Pope* as a *Principle* of *Unity*, and of the *Church* adhering to him as a *Guide* in *Controverſies*, of which this *Hypotheſis* allows them a Liberty to *judg*, in order to their own private ſatisfaction. And as the *matter* is ſuch, concerning which the meaneſt *Prudence*, that can deſerve the name of *Prudence*, is *obliged* to judg, ſo the *Evidence* is ſuch as every one muſt be *capable* of judging who is capable of being *Prudently* and *Rationally* a *Chriſtian*. For the very *Truth* of *Chriſtianity* it ſelf, in reference to us in this Age, muſt be proved by *Hiſtorical Teſtimonies* of the *Miracles* by which it was atteſted from the beginning; and the *Canon* of the *Scripture* muſt be proved by the *Teſtimonies* of thoſe by whom the Scriptures were delivered. And it is the ſame *Hiſtorical Teſtimony*, whether of *expreſs Scripture*, or of *expreſs Tradition*, to which they are here referred for the proof of this *Supremacy* of the *Pope*: and the *Subject* concerning which this Teſtimony was to be given, could not but have had ſo general an influence on their Practice (if they had acknowledged any dependence on this *Supremacy*) as that it muſt have been as notorious to them who gave it, as thoſe *Miracles*, or that *Canon*; and therefore their *Teſtimony* muſt have been as *Credible* in one Caſe as in the other.

§. 6. Beſides that the *Negative Argument* (which I here make uſe of) is much leſs Queſtionable than the *Affirmative*. That is, there is much more reaſon to *doubt* of a pretended *Tradition*, if it be not *expreſly* mentioned in the *Primitive Authors*, (and *doubting* is ſufficient for my purpoſe, to overthrow the credit of that which pretends to be an *Article* of *Faith*) than to believe a thing to have deſcended from the *Apoſtles*, becauſe thoſe *Authors* pretend it did ſo. For in their *Affirmations* they many times deliver what they think on their own *Conjectural Reaſonings*, wherein they are as *Fallible* as others. But what they have *not mentioned*, if it be not allowed to conclude that they *knew* it not, and that therefore there was then no *Hiſtorical Evidence* for it, ſeeing that could not have eſcaped their *knowledg*; yet thus much at leaſt will follow that we cannot be ſatisfied that they had any ſuch *Evidence*, which is enough to render it *doubtful* to us whether it were

were an *Apoſtolical Tradition*. Now that they did not mention this *Supremacy*, I do not deſire the *Ignorant* to take the bare word of our Authors; but I am content that they truſt their *own Judgment* concerning the paſſages produced, as far as they are capable of judging them; or where they find themſelves *unable*, that there they acquieſce in the Confeſſions of *Candid, Learned Men*, though of our Adverſaries Communion. Which is no more than what they themſelves count Prudent in the like Caſes, when they occur in the management of their Secular Affairs.

Uſe II. §. 7. Nor is it only thus *Convenient*, but it is almoſt *Neceſſary*, in dealing with our Adverſaries, to *begin*, at leaſt, with this *Fundamental Principle*. For till they be convinced of the *Fallibility* of their *Guide*, all the *Reaſons* produced againſt them are only taken for *Temptations* and trials of the ſtedfaſtneſs of their *Implicite Faith*. And, in affairs of this nature, they are taught to diſtruſt their *own Judgment* (nay, in matters of *Faith* the moſt *Learned Clergy* are taught to do ſo, as they are conſidered in their *private capacity*, as well as the more *ignorant Laity*) and they are further taught that, in ſuch matters, their *Faith* is by ſo much the more *excellent* and *meritorious*, by how much more it *captivates their Underſtandings*; and that this *captivating of their Underſtandings* implies a *denial* of their *own Judgments* when different from that of their *Superiors*. Now upon theſe terms it is impoſſible to deal with them by *particular Reaſonings*. For the utmoſt that can be expected from the *cleareſt Reaſonings*, is, that their *private Judgments* may be convinced by them. But if, when this is done, they *diſtruſt* their *own Judgments*, nay, think themſelves obliged to *deny* their *own Judgments* in compliance with that of their *Superiors*, nay, take it to be the greater *glory* of their *Faith* to deny the *greater* and *more powerful Convictions*; it will then follow that, by how much more *Conſcientiouſly* they Act according to their own Principles, by ſo much the leſs capable they muſt be of this kind of *Reaſoning*. It muſt needs be in vain to urge them with ſuch Reaſons, by which they will not be *tried*, though they ſhould indeed prove *convictive*, and that to their *own Underſtandings*.

§. 8. Nor indeed is it rational to expect that they ſhould be otherwiſe diſpoſed, purſuant to their Principles. For all *Prudent Conſiderers* of things will confeſs, that one *direct proof* that a thing is *actually True*, is more conſiderable than many *Probabilities* to the contrary. Eſpecially if the *direct proof* be of it ſelf ſtronger than

 any

any *contrary Objection*; as indeed no *Objection* can be ſo ſufficient to prove any *Propoſition falſe*, as the *Infallibility* of the Proponent is to prove it *true*. Which muſt the rather hold, conſidering that they take the *judgment* of their *Judg* of *Controverſies* for an *adæquately-infallible* Proof; never remembring that, though indeed the *Sprit* of *God* be *Infallible*, yet, the Argument whereby they prove their *Judg* of *Controverſies* ſo aſſiſted by that Spirit as to partake of its *Infallibility*, that is, ſo aſſiſted, as that their *Judg* of *Controverſies* ſhall *Infallibly* follow the *Infallible Guidance* of the *Spirit* (otherwiſe themſelves cannot pretend that all *aſſiſtance* of the *Spirit* muſt infer *Infallibility*, unleſs they will grant that every *good Chriſtian* is *Infallible*, becauſe they cannot deny that he is ſo *aſſiſted*) I ſay, theſe Arguments are only *Moral*, and ſuch as may, in many Caſes, be exceeded by Arguments taken from the *nature* of the *thing*; and that the Conſequence muſt follow the weaker part; ſo that ſtill their *Faith* can be no more than *morally certain*, though their *Judg* of *Controverſies* were granted to be *Infallible* in regard of his *aſſiſtance*.

§. 9. Yet even ſo, it ſhould be remembred on our part, that no Arguments were fit to be admitted againſt the ſenſe of an *Infallible Judg*, but ſuch as might exceed thoſe whereby their *Judg* of *Controverſies* ſeems to them to be proved *Infallible*; which would cut off many of thoſe Arguments which are uſed in the particular Diſputes. But beginning at their *Firſt Principle*, it is eaſie to ſhew that they are obliged to take our Arguments into ſerious conſideration, and to determine according as they judg *Reaſonable* in their *private Judgments*. For the *Judg* of Controverſies *cannot*, in reaſon, oblige them to *captivate* their *Underſtandings* to it ſelf, till it be proved. And the Arguments here uſed are Antecedent to that *Proof*. And when upon examination of the *Credentials* of the *Judg* of *Controverſies*, their *proof* of ſuch a *Judg* ſhall be found *inſufficient*, they will then, and not till then, have reaſon to truſt their *private Judgments* in the *particular Diſputes*. And then, and only then, the *particular Diſputes* may be likely to obtain an equal hearing from ſuch of them as are *truly Conſcientious*.

§. 10. Beſides, if this *Hypotheſis* hold true, it will be very uſeful both to retain ſeveral in the *Reformed Communion*, and to bring ſeveral others over from the *Roman*, who are already by their Principles diſpoſed for the *Reformation*. Uſe III.

1. There may be ſeveral, who, in the *particular Diſputes*, may probably incline to the *Roman* ſide, and yet have an abhorrence for the *Roman* rigour in thoſe *principal ones* concerning *Infallibility*, and the *Popes Supremacy*. Theſe, if they may be perſwaded that they may be admitted to that *Communion* without *profeſſing* the *Belief of thoſe* Principles to which we are as yet to ſuppoſe them ſo very averſe, may be tempted to think it lawful to joyn themſelves in *Communion* with them. This ſeems plainly to have been Mr. *Creſſy*'s Caſe, whoſe entrance into that Communion was very much facilitated by the account of *Infallibility* given him by Dr. *Veron*, whereby he was perſwaded that it was only a *School-term*, not uſed in the Decrees of any received Councils, no nor any way expreſly defined, and that the uſe of it would not be exacted from him by their *Church* as a Condition of her *Communion*. For he acknowledges he had formerly believed that this *main ground of the* Roman *Religon* (ſo he calls it) *namely the Infallibility of that Church was as demonſtratively confutable as any abſurdity in Mathematicks*. And particularly he confeſſes that Mr. *Chillingworth*'s Arguments againſt it had to him *appeared unanſwerable*; and that *his Book alone had the principal influence on* him *to ſhut up* his *entrance into Catholick Unity*. But it is here proved that whatſoever may be thought of the *Word* (concerning which more may be ſaid than was obſerved by Mr. *Creſſy*'s Friends, but that it is unneceſſary to ſay it on this occaſion) yet the *Thing* muſt neceſſarily be maintained by them on the ſame Principles by which they have preſumed to cenſure the *Reformation*, and in that very *ſenſe* wherein our Arguments are ſo concluſive againſt it. It is very ſtrange to me, and ſeems diſagreeable, I will not ſay to that *Candor*, but that *accurateneſs*, which was obſerved by him in that Enquiry, that he could pretend that it was the *Word Infallibility* againſt which Mr. *Chillingworth*'s Arguments had been ſo ſucceſsful, or that he could ſatisfie himſelf with that pretence in a matter of that importance. Indeed if his Arguments had been *Grammatical*, there might have been ſome colour for pretending that advantage was taken from the ambiguity of the *Word* to pick out the moſt Invidious ſenſe among thoſe many other more favourable ones of which it was capable; but being *Notional* and taken from the *nature* of the *Thing*, they muſt neceſſarily be levelled againſt it in ſome certain ſignification. And it had been eaſie to have ſhewn that they do as clearly overthrow

Exom. (2*d* Edition) Sect. 1. Ch. 19. §. 4. p. 74. Sect. 2. Ch. 21. Sect. 3. p. 188. *Append* Ch. 5. Sect. 2. p. 516. *See Verons* Lat. Anſ. to Q. Gener. 8. p. 561. at the end of the *Exom.*

Exom Sect. 1. Chap. 16. Sect. 3. p. 58.

Sect. 2. Ch. 21. Sect. 4. p. 190.

Sect. 2. Ch. 3. p. 90.

throw the *Infallibility of Judgment in a Creature in the uſe of Fallible Means* (which is the ſenſe which I have here proved the *Romaniſts* obliged to maintain) though their *Infallibility* were derived from the *Divine aſſiſtance*; as if it were derived from their *own Nature*, as that of God is, which is the ſenſe which Mr. *Creſſy* would make to be only concerned in theſe Arguments. It might eaſily have been alſo ſhewn that Mr. *Creſſy* himſelf grants the very *ſenſe* of the word here defined, and cannot deny but that it is very properly and naturally ſignified by it; nay that, by his own Principles, the Churches not uſing it in her Canons can be no Argument that ſhe ever intended to leave private Perſons at their liberty to uſe it, or forbear it, as they pleaſed. Whence it were eaſie further to infer, not only that it muſt needs be *intolerable* for private perſons to *deny* it, but alſo that it muſt be juſtly *Suſpicious* as much as to *waive* it (ſince it has been uſed) though on pretence of another ſenſe applicable to it, but never intended by them who brought it into the *Roman Church*, though at firſt they might have forborn the introducing of it. And if it be not *free* to Subjects, either to *deny* or *forbear* it, what room can be left for their Indulgence ſo much celebrated in this particular? Nay, what Indulgence could it be, if they might indeed be excuſed from the *Word*, as long as they are obliged to maintain the *Thing*; I ſay *obliged*, by doing that which cannot poſſibly be defended without ſuppoſing it? Certainly they cannot think but that *Actions* are as ſignificative as *Words* in reference to God and their own Conſciences.

§. 11. So alſo for the other point concerning the *Popes Supremacy*, it is an uſual Artifice whereby many others are ſeduced, that they are perſwaded that they may take the ſame Liberty that the *French* take, in Queſtioning the Popes *Monarchical Power*. But, from the Principles here laid down, it plainly appears that the Liberty taken by them is rather *connived* at by the *Roman Court* on Politick Conſiderations, than *approved* or *allowed* by the *Roman Communion*, as conſiſtent with their Principles. The like might have been ſhewn concerning ſeveral other Conſequential Doctrines which facilitate the ſeducing of *Proſelytes*; as that of the Diſtinction between the *Church* and *Court* of *Rome*, and the poſſibility of *Reforming* the *Abuſes* of the *Court* by the *Power* of the *Church*, &c.

§. 12. Now in Perſons who have not been inured to thoſe *Prejudices* of *Education*, and that great *Credulity* which are inſenſibly infuſed into Perſons *bred* in that *Communion* (which muſt be ſuppoſed to be the Caſe of them who are not as yet *Proſelyted* to it) theſe general Principles of *Infallibility* and the *Popes Supremacy* are like to meet with the moſt difficult reception. For to ſuch who have had experience of the difficulty of things by their own trial of them, and who are not averſe to any pains that may appear requiſite for the ſatisfaction of their Conſciences; it is ſo far from being likely to appear that it is an Act of *Chriſtian Vertue* to *avoid Evidence*, or to *ſuppreſs* their *Convictions*, when different from the Senſe of thoſe few intereſted Perſons who are plainly poſſeſſed of the Government of that whole Communion, as that (till their *Infallibility* be firſt proved) it it not likely to paſs for an Act of *common honeſty*. Nay, their expecting ſuch unreaſonable Conceſſions from them at firſt, would, to ſuch Perſons, be a very juſt reaſon of *ſuſpecting* them, when they ſhould find themſelves treated by them at the ſame rate as they might expect to be by the moſt profeſſed *Deceivers*. For what more likely Art could any *Deceiver* uſe, than to perſwade thoſe, whom he had a mind to ſeduce, to truſt in him without and againſt their own Convictions? Nor is it likely that they who have no other inducement than the *intrinſick reaſonableneſs* of its *proof*, ſhould be perſwaded to believe it as eaſily as they who have been inured to it by *Prejudices* of their *Education*. Nor is there that violence offered to their Faculties in following a *weak* and *doubtful Proof* in one particular inſtance, as in renouncing their *cleareſt Convictions* Univerſally, in all matters to be defined by their *Judg* of *Controverſies*. And therefore it is very poſſible for Perſons favourable to the ſenſe of the *Romaniſts* in many of the *particular Diſputes*, ſtill to be very averſe to their pretences to *Infallibility*; and this not (as it is uſually ſaid by our Adverſaries) only out of a *haughtineſs* and *unwillingneſs* to *yield*, but on *rational* and truly Conſcientious *accounts*.

§. 13. Nor is the other Doctrine concerning the *Monarchical Power* of the *Pope* leſs unacceptable to Perſons of another Communion before they are brought over to the *Roman*. I will not mention how much the conſequence of believing ſuch a Doctrine may impoſe upon their *Liberty*, becauſe that will not by our Adverſaries be thought a *Conſcientious Diſſwaſive* from it.

Though certainly it be very allowable to ſtand upon their own *Rights*, till they be convinced out of them by a *greater Evidence* than would ſuffice for Conceſſions of leſs importance; which is ſufficient for my preſent deſign. That which I had rather inſiſt on at preſent, is, the indefenſibleneſs of the abuſes of the *Court* of *Rome*, which are ſo groſs and provoking, as that generally they are the laſt things to which *Revolters* are reconciled; and uſually, when they are ſo, it is only on pretence that that *Church* is not concerned for them. But, by this *Monarchical Power* of the *Pope*, the power of *Reforming* them is aſcribed Only to him whoſe Intereſt it is they never be *Reformed*; and ſo to deſtroy all hopes of *Reformation*. Which is a conſideration that, if ſeriouſly thought of, would certainly ſtartle many of thoſe who are brought over to them on accounts truly Conſcientious, being ſeduced to it by ſuch falſe pretences.

§. 14. For when it ſhall appear to this ſort of Perſons (as I have endeavoured to make it appear by the following *Hypotheſis*) that their joyning in that *Communion* muſt neceſſarily imply their approbation of theſe *Unacceptable Doctrines*; they muſt find themſelves unavoidably reduced to this choice, whether they will embrace theſe *Doctrines* rather than forbear their *Communion*, or whether they will keep off from their *Communion* rather than own theſe *Schiſmatical Doctrines*. Nor will it be hard to judg how they would be likely to determine in ſuch a Caſe. For if their *averſation* to theſe *Doctrines* be greater than their *kindneſs* to *particular Opinions* or *Practices* of the *Roman Communion* (as I have already ſhewn that it is reaſonable to believe that it is frequently the Caſe of Perſons not yet *Proſelyted* by them) they muſt neceſſarily think themſelves obliged on theſe terms to continue where they are.

§. 15. 2. And the ſame things proportionably applied, may ſerve to ſhew the uſefulneſs of this *Hypotheſis*, for gaining ſeveral moderate Perſons of the *Romaniſts* themſelves. They who call the Doctrine of the *Popes Infallibility Archi-Heretical*, and confeſs themſelves unable, in this Principle, to defend their *Church* againſt us; when they ſhall find that the *Fundamental Principle* of their own, as a diſtinct *Communion*, is this confeſſedly indefenſible *Archi-Heretical Doctrine*, and that without this they cannot juſtifie either their *Separation* or their *Impoſitions*, they cannot think it ſafe

White's Tab. Suffrag.

ſafe in Conſcience to continue any longer *divided* from us.

§. 16. The ſame thing is alſo applicable to that other Doctrine which prevails with ſeveral very conſiderable Parties of the *Roman Communion*, That the *Supreme Judg of Controverſies* on Earth is either the *diffuſive Catholick Church*, or a *Council* that is truly *Free* and *General*, and accordingly received as ſuch by the *Catholick Church diffuſive*, and that that alone is the ſeat of Infallibility. They who are of this Judgment, if the following *Hypotheſis* hold true, muſt neceſſarily be obliged to *change* their *Communion* on two accounts.

1. That they cannot make out their own Title to their being the *Catholick Church* in this ſenſe, nor can they conſequently prove that many of our *Doctrines*, which they condemn as *Heretical*, have ever been *Canonically* condemned by this *Judge of Controverſies*. This will hinder them from *abſtaining* from our *Communion* for them.

And 2. That, on theſe Principles, the *Doctrines* of the *Popes Monarchy* and *Infallibility* muſt be *Heretical*. This will oblige them to *abſtain* from the *Communion* of thoſe who maintain them.

§. 17. 1. They cannot make out their Title to their own being the *Catholick Church* in this ſenſe. For evidently they are not the *Catholick Church diffuſive*, many conſiderable parts whereof are not in *Communion* with them. And therefore all the Plea they can make to the *Authority* or *Infallibility* of the *Catholick Church* muſt be grounded on the Notion of a *Catholick Church Virtual*, which Notion they muſt needs diſclaim in aſſerting the Power of the *diffuſive Catholick* or its *Lawful Repreſentative* over all *particular Churches*. Theſe things I conceive ſo clear from the Doctrine here delivered, as that I cannot think my ſelf obliged to ſay any more concerning them at preſent. Hence it will follow, that all thoſe *particular Doctrines*, which have been defined againſt us only by the *Weſtern Councils*, without the Suffrages of the *Eaſtern Biſhops*, or the reception even of all the *Weſtern Churches* themſelves, muſt fail of that pretence to *Infallibility*, which is here even from their own Principles proved neceſſary to juſtifie their *Separation* from us on that Account. And when theſe are deducted, there will remain but few Inſtances of *Doctrines* diſputed between us, if any, which themſelves can pretend to have been defined by the united Suffrages of all *Eaſtern*

As the *Florentine* Council, &c.

and

and *Weſtern Biſhops*, and unanimouſly received in the particular Dioceſes. Nor can they, on theſe terms, give any account why they condemn and exclude from their intereſt in the common *Judicatory* of *Chriſtendom* as *many*, and as *great*, and every way as *conſiderable*, Churches as themſelves.

§. 18. 2. But if ſuch *Weſtern Councils*, as are in this point defended by our Adverſaries of this Faction, muſt indeed be admitted for the *Supreme viſible Judicatories*, and conſequently as intituled to that *Infallibility* which is by them aſcribed to this *Supreme Judicatory*; I cannot conceive how they can avoid thinking themſelves obliged in Conſcience to ſeparate from the Communion of them who aſcribe this *Infallibility* to the *Pope* and his *Conclave*. For there is nothing that can be ſaid to juſtifie their *Separation* from us, but will as ſtrongly prove them obliged to *ſeparate* from their own *Brethren* of that Perſwaſion. For theſe *Councils* have taken upon them to decide the Controverſie concerning the *Supremacy*, by declaring this *Power* to be in the *Church diffuſive*, and themſelves to be *Lawful Repreſentatives* of that *Church*; and conſequently that all Eccleſiaſtical Power, the Papacy it ſelf being alſo expreſly mentioned, was ſubject to them For can they think that Propoſitions, neither *Neceſſary*, as to their *matter*, nor *Evident*, as to their Proof, can oblige Subjects to their Belief under pain of incurring the Cenſure of *Hereſie*, only on account of their being defined by their *Supreme Judg* of *Controverſies?* And is there any thing that themſelves can pretend to have been more expreſly defined by that *Judg*, than this is? If they will think to evade this Argument, by pretending that this Doctrine of the Power of their Judg of Controverſies is not ſo properly *de fide* it ſelf, as a Principle antecedent to the Belief of all Particulars that are ſo; yet this can derogate nothing from their obligation to ſeparate from the *Communion* of *Diſſenters* concerning it. For can they think themſelves obliged to *Separate* for the denial of one particular defined by that Authority? And is there not incomparably more reaſon they ſhould do ſo for the denial of the *Authority* it ſelf? Is not the *Authority* it ſelf more *Fundamental* than the *particulars* can be which, on theſe Principles, derive their whole Credibility from it? And muſt it not be much more heinous to deſtroy the Credit of all poſſible Particulars, which, on theſe *Principles*, is included in the *Judg* of *Controverſies*, than to refuſe

As of *Conſtance*, &c.

an actual Aſſent to any one Particular? And as it hence appears that the matter of theſe Differences among themſelves is more *momentous*, and more obliging to a *Separation*, than themſelves can pretend thoſe to be wherein they differ from us; ſo I may add farther, that the *Separation*, which ought in Conſcience to follow hereupon, muſt be equally *irreconcileable*. For will it not come to the ſame Event, whether we utterly diſown a viſible *Judg* of *Controverſies*, or whether we indeed own one, but own ſuch a one as that our Adverſaries cannot think themſelves obliged to ſtand to his Deciſion? In both Caſes there is equally acknowledged a Liberty of *Appeal* from all Power that is acknowledged by the Adverſary. And that Power which muſt decide Controverſies againſt an Adverſary who does not think himſelf obliged (as much as in Conſcience) to ſubmit to ſuch a Deciſion, muſt do it either by *Force* or *Arbitration*, which are Remedies as allowable by our Principles, as by thoſe of our Adverſaries. Nay, in this Caſe they cannot plead even that pretence of Canonical Punctuality, at leaſt ſo long to *forbear* ſeparating from the Communion even of *acknowledged Hereticks*, till their Cauſe were declared to be *Hereſie* by their *competent Judg*. For they who believe theſe *Councils* to have been the *Supreme Judicatories*, muſt conſequently conceive themſelves obliged to believe that their *Superiority* over the *Pope* has been defined by a *Canonical Authority*; and they who do ſo, can have nothing left to excuſe them for forbearing an *actual Separation*. And as it thus appears that they muſt hold themſelves *obliged* to abſtain from the Communion of thoſe Perſons who profeſſedly and expreſly own this Doctrine of the *Popes Monarchy*: So when they ſhall find that this *Monarchy* is indeed the *Fundamental Principle* of the whole *Roman Communion*, as diſtinct from others; they muſt, by the ſame Principles, think themſelves obliged to abſtain from the Communion of that *whole Church*, not only of thoſe who do *expreſly* defend that *Monarchy*, but alſo of others, though in *terms* denying it, as long as they keep to that Communion which cannot be kept without *conſequentially* defending it. It is in vain to think to weaken the *Authority* of the *Deciſion* of thoſe Councils, becauſe it was in a matter concerning their own *Intereſt*. For beſides that this will give Us a plain advantage againſt any *Authority* whereby they can pretend that we are Canonically cenſured; They themſelves are ſenſible, on other occaſions, that this

this is inſeparably the *Right* of the *Supreme Judicatory*, to *judg* even in matters of its *own Intereſt*; ſeeing there lies no Appeal from it, even in ſuch Caſes, to any other Judicatory that might judg more impartially concerning them. And they who think the Supreme Judicatory *Infallible*, muſt think themſelves alſo obliged, not only to a *Canonical Acquieſcence* for Peace's ſake, but alſo to an *Internal Aſſent* and Approbation of the Juſtice of ſuch a Decree, even out of Conſcience. This I conceive at leaſt ſufficient to prove, in this Caſe of perſons not proſelyted, as well as in the former of perſons already of that Communion, that they who do more firmly adhere to this Doctrine of the *Superiority* of the *Catholick Church diffuſive*, muſt think themſelves obliged to *ſeparate* from their *Communion*, when they are convinced of the Inconſiſtency of this Doctrine with it. The only difference is, that this firmer adherence to this Doctrine may more ordinarily and eaſily be expected from perſons not yet proſelyted, than from thoſe who are prejudiced in favour of the contrary by their Education in that Communion. Theſe are thoſe *Dividing Principles* intimated in the following *Anſwer to the Queries propoſed to the Gentlewoman*, though I was unwilling on that occaſion to enlarge further concerning them.

Anſw. to Q. 4. pag. 86.

§. 19. A fourth Uſe of this *Hypotheſis* is for the direction of *Peacemakers*, to let them ſee what it is that renders our Reconciliation impoſſible; and which, If it be not firſt accommodated, muſt render all their endeavours in particular Queſtions unſucceſsful; and therefore againſt which they ought more earneſtly to ſtrive by how much they are more zealous for *Catholick Peace*. The way hitherto attempted has been to endeavour to reconcile our particular Differences. This has been, either by clearing their reſpective *Churches* from all thoſe things for which they have not *expreſsly declared*, and of which *expreſs Profeſſions* are not exacted from Perſons to be reconciled unto them, by how great Authority ſoever of their *Particular Communicants* they have been countenanced or maintained. This way has been taken on their ſide by Mr. *Veron*, &c. and on ours by Biſhop *Montague*. Or where the Churches have declared themſelves, there by allowing the greateſt Latitude of *Expoſition*, and putting the moſt favourable Senſe on their Decrees of which they are capable. Thus *Grotius* has dealt with the *Council* of *Trent*, and *S. Clara* with our *Engliſh Articles*. The deſign of all the endeavours of

IV. Uſe.

this kind has been to reconcile the *Churches* without any yielding on either ſide. I confeſs I think the number of Controverſies may be exceedingly diminiſhed by this way of proceeding, which muſt needs be very acceptable to any, who is more a Lover of the Catholick Church's *Peace*, than of *Diſputation*. Many of the Tenets on both ſides, that are very invidiouſly repreſented by Adverſaries, will, on a cloſer Examination, appear to be either *miſtakes* of the Writers Meanings, or *Opinions* of *particular Writers*, or *Senſes* of the *Church's Decrees* which were never deſigned by the *Church* that made them; and conſequently unneceſſary to be aſſented to in order to a Reconciliation. But when all is done, they will fall very ſhort of reconciling the different *Communions:* For though all their *Particular Decrees*, even concerning *Faith*, were made *tolerable* by theſe means, (1.) Yet that were not ſufficient to prove their *Communion Lawful*; and (2.) Yet there can be no hopes of reconciling all *Particular Decrees* by theſe Means, but ſome will ſtill remain which will make their *Communion intolerable* to them of the other ſide.

§. 20. 1. *Though all their Particular Decrees of Faith might, by theſe means, be made tolerable; yet that were not ſufficient to prove their Communion Lawful.* For neither is there any Security that that *Senſe* of their *Decrees*, which might be taken for *tolerable*, would in *Practice* prove ſuch as would be admitted by Governours; ſo as that they on the other ſide might, on their owning of that Senſe, be received to their Communion. No, though it were countenanced by *Doctors* of never ſo eminent Note, nay, by the *Eccleſiaſticks* who ſhould receive them. For ſtill their *Church* ought to be admitted to be the moſt *Authentick Expoſitor* of her *own meaning*. And I do not doubt but ſeveral of their *Proſelytes*, who ſhould go over to them on account of many of theſe *moderate Explications*, would find themſelves miſtaken in many things as ſoon as their *Church* had any obligation to explain her ſelf concerning them. And though the *Church* might not think it worth her Interpoſition to do it upon the Reconciliation of every particular *Proſelyte*, yet She muſt certainly think her ſelf obliged to it in order to the Reconciliation of the *whole Communions*. Then many of theſe Palliations would certainly be found ſo repugnant to her Deſign, and ſo deſtitute of any plauſible appearance, as though She had been willing to yield in *earneſt* in inſtances

inſtances wherein She might not *ſeem* to do ſo (and that is the utmoſt condeſcenſion that can in reaſon be expected from a Church which pretends to be *Infallible*, at leaſt *while* She pretends to be ſo) yet they would not afford them even ſo, as much as a *Salvo* for their Reputation. Nay, though all her preſent *Decrees* of *Faith* had appeared *tolerable*, and appeared ſo in that very ſenſe wherein She really underſtood them; yet even this would not ſuffice for a ſolid *reconciliation* of *Communion*, as long as the ſame *Authority*, by which theſe other Decrees had been defined, is ſtill owned to be *Infallible*. For ſtill the next *General Council* (in the ſenſe wherein they give that Title to ſuch as are not truly *Occidental*) may define new Articles never yet defined, or at leaſt *declare* ſuch Propoſitions to be ſo, which, as yet while they are not defined, may very innocently be *disbelieved*. And then, as they, who even now believe what has been defined hitherto, not for the *intrinſick Probability* of the things defined; but for the *Authority* whereby they are defined, muſt find themſelves obliged, by the ſame Principles, to receive ſuch *new Definitions* of the ſame *Authority*; So we, who even now *disbelieve* them, on account of the unſatisfactorineſs of their *intrinſick Proofs*, and for the contrary Proofs produced againſt them, and who do not believe the *Authority* of their *Proponent* a ſufficient Argument to countervail theſe *intrinſick Confutations*, muſt ſtill continue to *disbelieve* them, even when they ſhall be ſo *defined*; which will then oblige us again to divide as great a diſtance as ever. Nor is this to be looked on as a Caſe unlikely to happen, conſidering that there are already many very ſuſpicious Doctrines ſo univerſally received, as that their Learned men confidently tell us that ſome of them are *ferè de fide*, and doubt of others whether they be not already *altogether ſo*. Where it is obſerveable that the grounds of their judging ſo, are, either the expreſsneſs of thoſe *Decrees* of their *Church* which are already made concerning them, or the *Univerſality* of their *reception*, or the ſtreſs which is laid upon them, which, in all likelihood, would prevail with ſuch a *General Council*, if it had been aſſembled, to give their Suffrages for them.

§. 21. 2. But though a Reconciliation of the Particulars hitherto defined might have been more available for a ſolid Peace, than it hence appears likely that it would be, yet *even this is not practicable by all the means of Reconciliation that have as yet been thought*

of. Some things have been defined in both Communions with ſuch a deſign upon *Diſſenters*, as that no mollifying Arts of Interpretation can prevail with any unprejudiced Perſon to believe that the *Senſes* really intended by them are reconcileable. Nor indeed have the *Romaniſts* any reaſon to expect that we ſhould agree with them in all the Particulars defined by them, whilſt we do not agree with them in acknowledging the Credibility of their *Judg* of *Controverſies*. For, antecedently to their being defined, they confeſs many of them ſo obſcure as that they may pardonably be *disbelieved* and *oppoſed*. And how can any wiſe man expect that all Men ſhould be of one mind in ſo many Inſtances of ſuch a nature? And yet even *one* unlawful Condition of Communion is alone ſufficient to make their Communion unlawful, and the Churches irreconcileable.

§. 22. Now that there are ſome things for which their Church her ſelf is unavoidably concerned wherein we have all the reaſon, that can be deſired, to expect that ſhe ſhould yield to us in order to the accommodation of our Differences, I think I might confidently appeal to as many *Learned Men*, though of our *Adverſaries Communion*, as have had as well the *Courage* to ſpeak their Thoughts, as the *Candor* to follow their own Convictions. The Teſtimonies of many of them, to this purpoſe, are already ſo well known, as that I believe it will not be expected that I ſhould exceed my preſent deſigned brevity by producing them. This therefore being ſuppoſed, it will plainly follow that no ſolid Peace can be expected with thoſe of that *Communion*, without ſome *Conceſſions* on their ſide; and therefore that which inevitably hardens them againſt all *Conceſſions*, muſt conſequently ruin all hopes of a *laſting Reconciliation*. Now this is done by their Doctrine of *Infallibility*, and their own Title to it. This is it that makes them preſume to *define* ſuch things as themſelves confeſs to be *inevident* Antecedently to their own defining them. This makes it impoſſible for them (as long as they pretend to it) to ſubmit thoſe things as much as to a *Review*, in this *Age* of *Knowledge*, which were at firſt defined in Ages of very great *Ignorance*. This hinders them from *yielding* to the *cleareſt Convictions* to the contrary, or from *acknowledging* them even where they cannot chuſe but yield to them. This keeps them from *reforming* any of thoſe Errors, of which we have reaſon to believe themſelves ſo ſenſible (ſince the great

modern Improvements of *Ecclesiastical Learning*) as that they would not have introduced them, if they had not found them already admitted, and thought themselves obliged not to *desert* them, nor to believe any Evidence sufficient to prove them *blame-worthy*, when they had once found them so admitted. And therefore it will concern all hearty well-wishers to *Catholick Peace*, to lay out their Zeal and Industry principally to discredit this one Doctrine which is so extremely pernicious to it.

§. 23. And in order hereunto I have endeavoured to make it appear, that the challenge of *Infallibility* to their whole *Communion* is truly grounded on a Principle disclaimed by considerable numbers of their *Communicants*; that is, the *Popes absolute* and unaccountable Monarchy *over the Catholick Church*. Whence it will follow, that, though *Infallibility* did indeed belong to the *Supreme Representative* of the *Catholick Church diffusive*, yet they can lay no claim to it who deny his *Papal Monarchy*. And therefore they who believe these *Promises* of *Infallibility* to have been originally made only to the *Catholick Church diffusive*, and withal deny this *absolute Monarchy* of the *Pope*, cannot lay any better claim to this *Infallibility* than any other part of the *Catholick Church diffusive* that is as great and as considerable as themselves. But themselves confess Churches no *less ample* for extent (and indeed *more considerable* for the multitude of *Apostolical Sees*) than their own, to be so far from being *Infallible*, as that they believe them *actually mistaken*, even in matters of *Faith*, and that for several Centuries together before the Reformation. And therefore all the *Authority* which they can challenge on these Principles is only a *Canonical* one, such as is due to particular *Provincial* or *National*, or *Patriarchal districts*, which are, on all sides, acknowledged to be *Fallible*. Which will not only concern the *Council of Trent*, but also all other Councils that are only *Occidental*.

§. 24. Now this Concession alone, that they are *Fallible*, would, at least, be sufficient to shew that they could not think it unlawful to *review* their own *Decrees*, and either to *correct* or *repeal* them, as they should Judg it reasonable upon that review. And though indeed it is not for the Interest of the *Publick* that *Governours* should be *too easie* in rescinding their own Acts, and especially at the motion of such as challenge it as a Duty from them to rescind them, and when it cannot be done without an acknowledgment of their having been formerly mistaken; yet it

is

is withal as little for that *Intereſt*, that they ſhould wholly deveſt themſelves of the Power of actually Practiſing it, when it ſhall appear neceſſary by the *exigencies* of the *Communities* for which they are intruſted. And, if, in any Caſe, this may be allowed to be *Expedient*, there can be no reaſon to doubt but that it is ſo here. The thing is of that *importance*, as that upon it depends the Reconciliation of the Divided Parties of *Chriſtendom*, which are neither likely to be ſubdued by the Power of any one, nor poſſible to be reconciled without Conceſſions on *ſome*, if not on *all*, ſides, by *Churches*, as well as by *private Perſons*; and it cannot appear on which ſide the Conceſſion is fit to be made, unleſs all ſubmit to a *trial*, and reſolve, upon trial, to yield to what they ſhall judg *reaſonable*. Beſides, there is a particular Reaſon why the *Church* ſhould reſerve an open Ear for all things that can be urged for her information in matters of *Faith*. Not only in regard that the things are ſuch as do not derive their *Lawfulneſs* or *Unlawfulneſs* from her Authority, but are what they are, either *True* or *Falſe*, Antecedently to it; ſo that her *Authority*, as it cannot change the *Nature* of the things in themſelves, ſo neither can it alter their *obligation* in reference to the Conſciences of thoſe who are otherwiſe perſwaded: Nor that She muſt be Reſponſible to *God*, how little ſoever She be ſo to her *Subjects*, if She betray her *truſt* in the *Faith once delivered* to her; and thereupon drive out of her Communion *Perſons*, who ought to have been encouraged to continue it, and break off from the Communion of other *Churches* with whom She ought to have maintained a correſpondence: But alſo becauſe her whole Authority depends on it. For if She be Erroneous in *Fundamentals*, eſpecially if her Error be by way of *Defect* in them, She is uncapable of being a *Chriſtian Church*, and conſequently uncapable of *Eccleſiaſtical Authority*. So that, as She tenders her whole Authority in *other things*, She is obliged to uſe all diligence to ſecure her ſelf from Error in *theſe*, and it muſt be her beſt *Policy* to do ſo. Nay, the greateſt *Human Authorities* that are, and who are moſt Critical in inſiſting on theſe *Punctualities* of *Policy* in maintaining what they have once determined, yet think it no diſparagement to them to condeſcend to a *review*, and to *change* their *Judgments*, upon *better Information*. And ſince the retriving of that ſort of *Learning*, which is requiſite for clearing *Apoſtolical Tradition*, which came in with the *Reformation* of *Religion*,

gion, the *Church* of *Rome* her ſelf is much better informed, and better qualified for *Judging*, than She was in thoſe *obſcurer Ages*, wherein She firſt defined them.

§. 25. Suppoſing therefore that She were thus diſpoſed to come to a *review*, it plainly follows further, that the whole force of her *new Decrees* upon this *review*, muſt be reſolved into the *merit* of the *Cauſe*. For when her *Judgment* has once been acknowledged *Fallible*, there can then remain no further pretence of any greater *Certainty* in her Concluſions, than in the *Premiſes* from whence they were deduced by her. And from hence it would be very reaſonable to expect, 1. That She would not upon this new review *define* what She ſhould believe *inſufficiently proved* Antecedently to her Definition. This being applied to particulars, would cut off very many of her *newly introduced Articles* which her moſt eminent Champions confeſs *inevident* Antecedently to her defining them. And we might expect the number of Articles, which would be reduced upon this way of Trial, the more conſiderable, if, 2. All thoſe counterfeit Miracles and *Revelations*, and all thoſe *counterfeit Authors* and *Authorities* were waved, which at the defining of theſe Articles were generally believed *genuine*, but are ſince as generally acknowledged to have been *Forgeries*. All thoſe Doctrines which, upon ſuch Teſtimonies as theſe, were taken for *Apoſtolical*, muſt loſe their Credit of being ſo as ſoon as theſe *Teſtimonies* ſhall be convicted of incompetency for aſſuring us what was *Apoſtolical*. Eſpecially, 3. If none but the earlieſt Writers be truſted, as indeed none elſe are competent, for conveying *Apoſtolical Tradition* to us. And, 4. If they were wary in this kind to impoſe no *Doctrines* as *Conditions* of their *Communion*, but ſuch as might appear even to themſelves very *Neceſſary* and very *Evident*: If the defalcations were made which we have reaſon to believe would be made, even by themſelves, upon the Suppoſitions now mentioned, I do not ſee any reaſon to deſpair of ſo much Liberty to be allowed by them as would ſuffice to reconcile our Communions. And this I believe will be an information very uſeful, and very accceptable to all hearty deſirers of the *Peace* of *Chriſtendom*, that is indeed, to all *truly-Chriſtian* Spirits.

§. 26. A fifth Uſe of this *Hypotheſis* is, that it will ſerve for a *Scheme* of *Principles* to juſtifie the *Reformation*, for which ſome of our Modern Adverſaries have been ſo very importunate. Nor do Uſe V.

I pre-

Dr. *Stillingfleet.*

I pretend hereby to ſuperſede the Endeavours of that admirable Perſon who has already undertaken them. His Principles do excellently well ſhew that, as to the *Reſolution* of our *Faith* in thoſe Particulars which are truly of an *Apoſtolical Original*, and wherein we do agree with the *Romaniſts* themſelves, we can ſufficiently prove them derived from the *Apoſtles* by *competent Teſtimonies* of the ſeveral Ages through which they muſt have paſſed, without being any ways beholden to an *Infallible Judg* of Controverſies. Nay that ſuch an *Infallible Judg* is indeed a Means improper for ſuch an End; as requiring many ſuch things for its proof, to us, who muſt be ſuppoſed to live at a diſtance from the time of its Original Inſtitution, as are every way, at leaſt, as liable to Diſpute as the Controverſies to be determined by it. So that hence it appears that we may be *Chriſtians*, nay and *Catholicks* too, that is, that we may believe as many Articles as at firſt were impoſed as neceſſary to be believed, without the leaſt obligation of being *Romaniſts*, that is, of believing all their ſuperinduced Novel Doctrines. And this is of excellent uſe againſt them in the whole Diſpute concerning the *Reſolution of Faith*, where they pretend that the *Books* of the *Scriptures* themſelves, and the Senſe *of thoſe Books*, and conſequently all the *Articles* which are proved from thoſe *Senſes*, cannot be proved Credible *to Us* without the *Authority* of their *Judg* of *Controverſies*; and therefore that as we follow this *Authority* in theſe things, ſo we ought to follow it in all other things equally recommended by it, which muſt therefore be equally Credible with them. This *Conſequence* will indeed hold with them concerning whom the *Suppoſition* is true; and therefore it cannot be ſtrange that the *Romaniſts*, who profeſs to believe our common Articles on the *Credit* of this *Authority*, ſhould look on thoſe whom they call *Hereticks* as *chooſers* in Religion, and as *ſelf-condemned*, in refuſing to believe *other things* as credible, and credible on the ſame Principles with *thoſe* they do believe, they ſtill ſuppoſing that they, whom they call *Hereticks*, believe the *common Articles* on the ſame Principles on which themſelves believe them. But from the Principles of that excellent Perſon it plainly appears, that the *Suppoſition* is not true concerning *Us*; and that as we profeſs we do not, ſo there is nothing that can in Reaſon oblige us to believe even our common Articles on the *Authority* of their, or any other pretended *Infallible Judg* of *Controverſies*.

§. 27.

§. 27. But the *Principles* here advanced do not ſo much concern the *Articles* wherein we are *agreed*, as thoſe wherein we *differ*, and therefore will more immediately reach the Popiſh Communion as *Popiſh*, and the Proteſtant as properly ſo called, that is, as *proteſting* againſt their *Errors*, and againſt the *Uncanonical courſes* taken by them for *Impoſing* their Errors, and for the *ſuppreſſing* of all oppoſition to the contrary. Here it is firſt proved that it being our part only to Aſſert our own *Liberty* from their *Additional Articles*, they are obliged to *prove*, not we to *diſprove*, their *Impoſitions*. Then, becauſe the *firſt Principles* of their *Impoſitions* are not agreed on by themſelves, but expreſly denied by ſeveral Perſons in their *Communion*, therefore I have proceeded to enquire after them, by knowing what it is that they are obliged by neceſſary conſequence to maintain on account of their being of that *Communion*; ſo that by finding theſe we have all their *particular Doctrines* reduced to their *firſt Principles*. And the diſcovery of the *weakneſs* of the *proofs* producible for theſe (upon the former Suppoſition that they are obliged to *prove* them) is as clear a Diſcovery of the *Juſtice* of the *Reformation* from the *firſt Principles*, as the nature of the thing will bear.

§. 28. A ſixth and laſt Uſefulneſs of this *Hypotheſis* above others is, that it is capable of a more eaſie proof, and a proof more likely to prevail *ad homines*. For the ſeveral Parties among our Adverſaries will not only grant us each of the *Premiſes*, but undertake to prove them for us; and an indifferent Perſon will not be beholden to either of them for the *Concluſion*. That he cannot be true to the *Principles* of their *Communion* (or, (to uſe their language) that he can be *no ſound thorough Catholick*) who does not hold *Infallibility*, and that confined to that *part* of the *Church* which is in their *Communion* on account of their being *virtually Catholick*, the *Jeſuites*, and other *high Papalins* will affirm, and it is *that* for which they contend. To them therefore I ſhall refer all thoſe of that Communion, who ſhall doubt of the cogency of the proofs here produced, for further ſatisfaction. I could heartily wiſh that the *odium* of this *reference* might make them decline the Service; and ſhould take it for a highly commendable condeſcenſion, if ſuch as they, who have devoted themſelves to the Service of the *Catholick Church*, could be perſwaded to declare their diſlike of *Principles* ſo pernicious to *Catholick Peace*. But I fear it is a favour too great to be expected from them. Uſe VI.

them. If any therefore doubt of the other *Premiſs*, *viz.* the *indefenſibleneſs of this challenge to Infallibility*, and of this *Notion* of a *Catholick Church virtual*, on which that challenge muſt be grounded, he may be pleaſed to conſult thoſe of their Writers who defend the *Supremacy* of *General Councils*, or rather of the *Catholick Church diffuſive*. So that this way of proceeding will be moſt ſuitable for *all ſorts* of Adverſaries. If they read it with a *deſire* of *ſatisfaction*, they will find that more eaſie when they ſhall conſider that it proceeds only on that which themſelves do partly grant true already, ſo that there will only one *Premiſs* remain concerning which they can deſire further ſatisfaction. If they read it with a *deſign* of *confutation*, they will alſo find *that* more difficult when they ſhall remember that they cannot undertake it without eagaging a very conſiderable *Party* among themſelves in the defence of theſe *Fundamental Principles* of their whole *Communion*.

§.28. Many great and conſiderable improvements might have been alſo made of this *difference* of their *Authors* in matters of ſo great importance to their *common Intereſts*, which may hereafter be more fully enlarged on as themſelves ſhall adminiſter a further occaſion for it. This will ſhew how little reaſon they have to boaſt of their *Unity* when it thus appears that they are ſo little agreed in theſe *Principles* of their *Unity*. So that, as it has already appeared that their difference herein muſt in reaſon oblige them to ſeparate in their *Communion*, if they act conformably to their *Principles*, ſo nothing but a *provocation* like that which was given to *Luther* and *Henry* the *Eighth*, can be wanting to them who deny this *Monarchy* of the *Pope*, to make them do as they did, *viz.* *actually* to *divide* their *Commnnion* as their *Principles* already oblige them. This will alſo let them ſee how little advantage their *Laity* is like to have above ours in judging of the Controverſies which *divide* our *Communions*. They would have them take the *Judg* of *Controverſies*'s word for the *Particulars*. That may be when they have found him. But when there are *different Pretenders* (as there are here, the *Pope*, the *Council*, and the *Church diffuſive*) how ſhall they judg who has the *juſteſt Claim?* Muſt they judg of the *reaſons*, at leaſt of *Credibility?* That is it that we would have them do, and for which we are blamed as putting them upon a *task* too difficult for them, or encouraging them to entertain *too good* an *Opinion* of their own abilities. Muſt they take the

the *Pope*'s word in the Caſe? But he is yet only a *Party*; and, till the *Motives* of *Credibility* be tried, can have no advantage above other's his *Competitors*. And then, why may not They be truſted alſo? If they be all truſted, their Pretenſions being ſo inconſiſtent, the *Laick*, who truſts them, muſt ſtill be left as irreſolute as ever. Muſt they therefore follow the judgment of their *moſt Credible Divines* concerning it? But that will again be as hard a task as the former, to be able, in ſo great apparent Equality, to diſtinguiſh who are the *moſt Credible*; eſpecially abſtracting from the *merit* of the *Cauſe*. And what advantage the favourers of the *Papacy* have in *numbers*, that the others have in *diſintereſſedneſs*, which will go very far in recommending the *Credibilty* of an *Authority* in ſuch a Caſe as this is. Beſides the greateſt *Authority* of *Divines* will not by themſelves be allowed for any more than a *probable*, and therefore a *very fallible*, inducement. But how much more ſo, when there are other *Divines* as eminent as themſelves of *another Judgment*? And even *Infallibility* it ſelf, if it be received on a *Fallible recommendation*, will ſtill amount to no higher than a *Fallible Proof*; which even themſelves cannot judg ſufficient for their purpoſe in ſuch a Caſe as this is. If both *Pretenders* and *Divines* be truſted on both ſides as far as their Pretenſions are *not inconſiſtent* with each other, this will effectually ſerve my purpoſe, and convince the *Laick*, who truſts them, of the *inſecurity* of their *whole Communion*. For he muſt thus be obliged to grant both the *Premiſſes* of the *Argument* by which I have here proved it *unſecure*.

The *Major* is this,

Infallibility, as appropriated to the *Roman* Communion by their Title to their being virtually Catholick, that is, by their adhering to the Papacy as a Principle of Catholick Unity in the ſenſe above explained, is the Fundamental Principle of that whole Communion as diſtinct from others:

This he muſt believe on the *Authority* of the *Popes* themſelves who have declared for it, and of the *Jeſuites*, and the reſt of the *high Papalins*.

The *Minor* this:

But this Authority of the Papacy (*on which the Title of that*

whole Communion to Infallibility *is grounded)* is falſe and improbable.

This he muſt alſo for the ſame reaſon believe on the *Authority* of all thoſe who defend the *Supremacy* of *General Councils*, or of the *diffuſive Catholick Church*. So that in this way of judging by *Authorities* (which is agreeable to the *Genius* and *Principles* and *Arguments* of that *Church* againſt us in other like Caſes) the *Laity*, at leaſt, muſt be obliged to *diſtruſt* their *whole Communion*, as *Fundamentally* grounded on an *unwarrantable Principle*. But of theſe and other like matters, perhaps a larger account may be given on future occaſions.

AN

AN

ANSWER

TO

Six Queries,

PROPOSED

To a *Gentlewoman* of the Church of *ENGLAND*, by an Emissary of the Church of *ROME*; fitted to a Gentlewomans Capacity.

By *HENRY DODWELL* M. A. and sometimes Fellow of *Trinity Colledge* near *DUBLIN*.

LONDON:

Printed for *Benj. Took.* MDCLXXXVIII.

A PREFACE.

IT is of no further concernment to acquaint the Publick with the occaſion of penning theſe Papers, than as the occaſion might have an influence on the Deſign; and as it may be very uſeful to inform the Reader of the Deſign, *that he may the better know what to expect in the* Performance.

He may therefore be pleaſed to underſtand that the following Queries were tendred to a Gentlewoman of the Communion of the Church of England *by a* Romaniſt, *who had a deſign of ſeducing her; and that they were anſwered by another hand, but on ſuch Principles, or in ſuch a way of management, as that it did not give her the deſired ſatisfaction. This gave occaſion to ſome that were concerned for her, to ſhew the Paper to ſome others, in order to the inviting them to undertake it in a way that might be likely to prove more ſucceſsful. By this means of Communication it came at length to my hands, from a Perſon who firſt deſired my Opinion concerning it; and then with ſome earneſtneſs importuned me to commit my thoughts to writing. Purſuant therefore to this occaſion, my Deſign was in the firſt place to ſhew from ſound Principles, that the Church of* England *is able to defend her Reformation from the Errors of the* Romaniſts, *and to clear her ſelf, as far as She is charged with that Breach of Communion which followed thereupon, without giving any advantage to the* Non-

Non-Conformists *to justifie either their first Separation from Us, or their Eternal Subdivisions from one another. Nor was I willing to engage a Person in the Gentlewomans condition, in any Controversies that might be spared without Injury to the* merit *of the* Cause; *or to debate even such as could not so be spared, by such Arguments as might exceed her opportunities of Enquiring, or her capacity of Judging, so as to oblige her to depend on the conduct of others more Inquisitive and Judicious. But I have either waved* Authorities *where I could debate the Case by Arguments less liable to Dispute, and better suited to the understanding of a Gentlewoman; or where I have been necessitated to insist on them, I have endeavoured to make out their Credibility by such* Presumptions *as are easie to be understood, and familiar in parallel Cases, and generally granted as most* Prudent, *whenever* unskilful Persons *find themselves obliged to acquiesce in the conduct of Persons* more skilful *and* judicious *than themselves. And I have purposely avoided all Citations of* Authors, *even where necessary, but such as were to be had, even in* English, *and therefore might be consulted by the Gentlewoman her self.*

I confess those other Reasonings fit for Scholars, as they are more subtle, *so they are withal more* solid *and* conclusive. *But withal I consider,* 1. *That those things wherein* Scholars *have the advantage of* unlearned Persons, *are principally such wherein* Reading *is absolutely necessary for their Historical conveyance to us. It is certainly impossible for any to know what Doctrines were maintained in the* Apostles times (*and consequently what Doctrines are* true, *where they are supposed capable of no other Evidence of their being true, but because they were so maintained*) *without insight into the several Histories and Authors of the intermediate Ages through which they are to be deduced. But for other things whose evidence of their being true, does not depend on such a conveyance, the Rea-*

son

ſon of the thing is a ſufficient Evidence; and of this every equally rational Perſon, *how little ſoever he be converſant in Authors, is an* equally competent Judge. *And of this kind are many of the things here mentioned, on which the ſtreſs of the cauſe depends. The prudent Reader will eaſily diſcern which they are, without my inſtancing. And* 2. *even in thoſe things which depend on* Poſitive Revelation, *and wherein the only means of our* Aſſurance *of them is* Hiſtorical Tradition; *though it be indeed true that Perſons of little Reading cannot ſo competently aſſure themſelves of the Writings and Opinions of former Ages, without the aſſiſtance of others more converſant in thoſe Studies: Yet ſince it is not the way of Prudent rational Perſons, therefore to conclude a thing to have been revealed by the Apoſtles, becauſe ſuch Authors tell us that it was ſo; much leſs becauſe ſuch Authors maintained it, as their own Opinion; but firſt to aſſure themſelves of ſuch things on which the Credibility of ſuch Authors in ſuch matters may be made clear to us, and then of thoſe Expreſſions from whence they conclude ſuch Authors to have given Teſtimony to ſuch a thing as an Apoſtolical Tradition: It is plain that the Judgment of theſe things depends wholly on the Reaſon of the things themſelves. And therefore where Learned Men are agreed, as to their accounts of the Authors and their Expreſſions; and where the only remaining Diſpute is, Whether ſuch undoubted Works of ſuch Authors be competent for the conveyance of a Tradition; and whether ſuch Expreſſions, conſidered in all their Circumſtances, come home to the Controverſies at preſent debated; theſe are things whereof common Prudence, and a cultivated natural Judgment may as well qualifie Men to paſs a Cenſure as the greateſt Reading imaginable. And this ſeems to me the beſt way in affairs of this nature, to wave ſuch things as were diſputed among Learned Men concerning their Hiſtorical Informati-*

ons, and only to found my reaſonings on their unanimous Conceſſions. And moſt of the Controverſies betwixt Us and the Romaniſts are of that nature as to be capable of this way of management. Now this way of not intermedling in the Diſputes of Learned men, but only proceeding on their unqueſtioned Conceſſions is (as moſt ſolid and ſatisfactory to the moſt accurate Learned men themſelves, ſo) moſt prudent and eaſie for thoſe who are unlearned. And 3. even as to thoſe other things wherein I have indeed proceeded on popular Preſumptions, yet conſidering that theſe are the only Reaſons which God has fitted to the capacities of the greateſt part of Mankind, and that God is in his Goodneſs concerned to give them Reaſons ſufficient for their direction, and that the Nature of the Things themſelves is of importance to his Government, and that it is therefore requiſite that their directions be ſuch as may not only excuſe their miſtakes, but ſecure them of the Truth it ſelf; I ſay, theſe things being conſidered, there will be reaſon to believe, that however fallible ſuch general Preſumptions may be in their own nature, yet that God in his Goodneſs has ſo ordered the matter in affairs of this nature, as that thoſe who are guided by theſe Preſumptions, may by the uſe of them be ſecured of the Truth it ſelf in theſe Particulars.

As for the Method obſerved in this Diſcourſe, it is ſuch as I conceived moſt clear and comprehenſive in few words, and yet withal moſt accurate and ſatisfactory to a doubting Perſon. For any one may be much more ſecure of a Conſequence when he is firſt ſecured of all its Principles, and he can much better judge of them when he has an intire Proſpect of them in the natural Order wherein they lye, and wherein they are neceſſary for the deduction of ſuch a Conſequence. Tet I have neither deduced my Principles too remotely, but as near as I could find them clear and indiſputable; Nor have we inſiſted on the Proof of thoſe that

that were clear, *any further than I conceived it neceſſary to do ſo from the actual Diſputes concerning the* Conſequence. *And I have been careful rather to* prove *than to* confute; *which I conceived to be a courſe, as* leſs Invidious *to* Adverſaries (*who ſhould find themſelves no further concerned than as the* conſequences *of* poſitive Truths *might make them concern'd*) *ſo alſo* more ſatisfactory *to a Perſon in the Gentlewomans condition. And in the whole I am ſo little conſcious of any deſign of diſpleaſing any to whom Truth it ſelf might not prove diſpleaſing, as that if any Adverſary ſhall think it worth his time to Anſwer what I have ſaid, I am not my ſelf afraid of Provocation from any thing which he can ſay in following my Precedent.*

THE

CONTENTS.

Qu. 1. *Whether any one going from the Church of* England, *and dying a* Roman Catholick, *can be saved?* Page 1.

Q. 2. *Whether they be Idolaters, or No?* 11.

Q. 3. *Where was the Church of* England *before* Luther's *time?* 14

Q. 4. *Why all the* Reformed Churches *are not United in One?* 22

Q. 5. *Why the Church of* England *doth not hold up to* Confession, Fasting-days, Holy Oyl, *which we our Selves commend?* 26

Q. 6. *Why was* Reformation *done by* Act *of* Parliament? 29

AN

AN ANSWER TO SIX QUERIES, &c.

Q. 1. *Whether any one going from the Church of* ENGLAND, *and dying a* Roman Catholick, *can be ſaved?*

I. IF by the words [*can be ſaved*] be meant a *poſſibility* in regard of the MEANS, we then deny it. For we hold that ſuch Errors are maintained in that Communion as are in their own *nature* deſtructive af *Salvation.*

Such are,

1. The Doctrines even of their * *Church* which oblige them to do miſchief (as thoſe concerning the Popes *Supremacy* over Princes in *Temporals*, and concerning their Duty of *proſecuting Hereticks*) The † looſneſs of their *Caſuiſtical Divinity*, countenanced by ſuch Authorities of *Caſuiſts* as muſt needs influence ſuch Perſons as act conformably to the Principles of that Communion; and their generally allowing a greater Liberty to ſuch Perſons as are deſirous to reconcile their Vices with their hopes of Eternity, by their licentious Applications of thoſe two Diſtinctions of *Precepts* and *Counſels*, and of *Mortal* and *Venial Sins*, whereby they make moſt *Duties* Counſels, and moſt *Sins* only Venial. Which danger is the more conſiderable to an ignorant Perſon, who for want of Skill of her own, muſt in Prudence, and by the Principles of that Communion, be obliged to truſt ſuch unſecure Guides.

2. Not to mention the ill Influence of ſeveral of their Doctrines on the Lives of ſuch as own them; the very *impoſing* them as matters of *Faith*, the *Excommunicating* and *Anathematizing*

* Vid. *Conſid. of Preſ. Concern.*

† *For the* Jeſuites, *ſee the* Provinc. Lett. *and the* Moral Theolog. of the Jeſuites; *and for the reſt of that Communion, the* Jeſuites *defence of themſelves by way of recrimination againſt others.*

zing all that deny them, the condemning Dissenters as guilty of *Heresie* and *Schism* (at least what they call *Material*) the inserting several of their controverted Doctrines into their Liturgies, so that they who cannot believe them, cannot veraciously joyn with them in their Devotions, are Innovations from the liberty allowed in the Primitive Church, wherein many (whom all own for excellent Persons and good Catholicks) never owned, nay some of them doubted of, or contradicted, such conditions of Communion; in sum, their unreasonable grounds of *dividing Catholick Communion*, and their *Uncharitableness* to *Dissenters*, are Errors dangerous to the Salvation of the Person owning and abetting them. For all will own, even the *Romanists* themselves, that the Crime of breaking Catholick Communion, where it is justly imputed, is destructive of Salvation.

3. Several *Abuses* of that Church (I say of the *Church*, not only of *particular Persons* in it) are so gross as that several of the most eminent and candid men of their own Communion have owned them for such: such as *Prayer in an unknown Tongue*, *denying the Chalice to the Laity*, *Fabulous Saints and Stories* still continued in the best approved Ecclesiastical Offices, *Martyrs canonized for bad Causes* conducing to the greatness of the *Roman* See, as *Becket* for Example: Yet by the Principles of that Communion, pretending to *Infallibility*, it is impossible that any *Abuse* (in defence of which their *Church* is engaged, as She is here) should ever be *reformed*, because it is impossible that a Church, so pretending to be *Infallible*, should ever grant any such thing to be an *Abuse*. And many more abuses are by the moderate Persons of their Communion owned in the Court of *Rome*, which yet by the power allowed to the *Court* over their *Church*, by the general consent of the *Church* it self, cannot possibly be reformed. Seeing therefore that the *Church* of *Rome* does thus oppose all possible Reformation of Abuses of this nature; and seeing that, whilst these Abuses are not reformed, many of them may justifie a Separation, and most of them may do it when all hopes of Reformation are professedly opposed; Catholick Peace on such terms as may, not only lawfully, but commendably, be yielded, will be impossible. And the abetting of such a Party as makes *Catholick Peace* on just terms *impossible*, must needs be an Error destructive of Salvation. This is a mischief unavoidably consequent to mistakes in a Society pretending to be *Infallible*.

As

As theſe Errors are thus of their own nature deſtructive of Salvation, ſo going over to that Communion from another, does naturally involve the Perſon doing ſo, in the actual guilt of the Errors themſelves:

1. Becauſe *Communicating* (according to all) does involve the Perſons communicating in the guilt of ſuch Errors, at leaſt, as are impoſed as *conditions* of the *Communion*, as theſe are in the Church of *Rome*. This needs not to be proved againſt the *Romaniſts*, who inſiſt on it againſt Us, as much as We do againſt them.

2. This muſt eſpecially hold in ſuch as *revolt* from our Church to theirs: both becauſe ſuch an embracing of their Communion is more an Argument of *choice* and *deſigned preference* in ſuch as leave others to come to it, than in ſuch as are born in it, and conſequently muſt ſignifie a more expreſs approbation of the Terms of it; and becauſe more *explicite recantation* of our Doctrines are required even from *Laick Revolters*, than from ſuch as are born in it.

3. Becauſe the *Reſignation* of *Judgment* is expected more intire from *Women* and *Laicks* than from *skilful Perſons* (who may in ſome caſes be allowed the Liberty of their own Judgment even by the Principles of that Communion) ſo that Perſons in the Gentlewomans condition, may by this means come to be Reſponſible not only for the dangerous *Doctrines* of their *whole Church*, but alſo for the *Perſonal Errors* of their *Prieſts* and particular *Confeſſors*: both as they are (by the Principles of that Communion) allowed to be the Authentical Proponents of the *Doctrines* of their *Church*, to *unlearned Perſons* (who are not themſelves qualified for judging concerning them) as their Church is of the *Doctrines* of *Chriſt* to the *Learned*; and as the ſame Rules of *Prudence* oblige them as ſtrongly to truſt their *particular Prieſts* for *Opinions*, as they do their *Church* for *Doctrines of Faith*, where they are ſtill preſumed as uncapable of judging themſelves.

II. If by this *poſſibility of Salvation* mentioned in the Queſtion, be meant only [*a poſſibility of the* EVENT] notwithſtanding the dangerouſneſs of the *condition* of Perſons of that Communion, upon account of their being of it; then the Reſolution will depend on this: How far Errors of their own nature *damnative* may not prove actually *deſtructive* to the Salvation of the particular

particular Erroneous Perſon, on account of the *Ignorance* and *Unvoluntarineſs* with which the Perſon comes to be engaged in ſuch Errors? For on theſe accounts it may be conceived that the Errors may either not be imputed to her at all, or be imputed in ſo low a degree as to become pardonable by the general Stipulations and promiſes of the Goſpel for the pardoning of Sins of *Inadvertency* and *humane frailty*, which are ſuppoſed expiable by a general Care of fulfilling the conditions of the Evangelical Covenant, together with a general implicite Repentance of Sins unknown as well as known.

Now of theſe two ways whereby an Error *damnative* of its own *Nature* may be hindred from proving *actually damnative* in the *Event* to the *Erroneous Perſon*, it is only an *Invincible Ignorance* (that is, *ſuch as can be remedied by no means that are in the power of the Perſon who is ſuppoſed Erroneous*) that can hinder all Imputation of her Error to her; and only ſuch a degree of *Vincible Ignorance* can ſuffice for extenuating the Imputation ſo far as to render it pardonable in the way now mentioned, that is very hardly avoidable by the Perſon, conſidering the frailty to which her condition in this Life is obnoxious. So that for judging concerning the Condition of *Revolters* (which is the Gentlewomans caſe) the Enquiry will be, what degree of Ignorance they are capable of that may make their Errors *Involuntary?* that is, How far ſuch as they are, may be capable of being *Ignorant* of their Duty to adhere to ours as the true Communion? And for diſcerning this, theſe following Particulars would be fit to be conſidered.

1. That we are all agreed (*Romaniſts* as well as *Proteſtants*) that all ſorts of Perſons (*Ignorant* as well as *Learned*) are obliged to adhere to the true Communion (whatever that is) in contradiſtinction to others, at leaſt, under pain of loſing the *Ordinary means of Salvation*, and conſequently that comfortable *ſatisfaction* of the ſecurity of their own condition, which they who enjoy the *Ordinary means of Salvation* muſt needs be more capable of than they who are neceſſitated to repoſe their whole confidence in Gods *Extraordinary Mercies*.

2. That all Perſons being thus obliged by God to embrace the true Communion, the Inducements to it muſt be ſuppoſed ſufficient for the conviction of all, and conſequently ſuited to the capacities of all who are thus concerned to receive Conviction.

3. There-

3. Therefore the *Reasons* being thus supposed sufficient for the conviction of all, there can be no pretence of *Invincible Ignorance* for any but such as are Ignorant of those Reasons, which cannot be supposed to be the case of *Revolters*.

Hence it follows, at least, that if *Revolters* act rationally, that is, Enquire *what* it is they leave, and *why*, and accordingly follow their Convictions as they ought, before their Change; they cannot be supposed capable of *Invincible Ignorance*. So that the only imaginable pretence for rendring their Error *Invincible*, must be the supposed *Invincibleness* of those *Prejudices* which may hinder a well-meaning Person, acting *conscientiously*, from acting *rationally*. Which must be either,

1. *Opinions* conceived obligatory in *Conscience*, hindring the Persons embracing them from *Enquiry*, or *following* their own *Convictions*; of which kind many instances may be produced which are favoured by the *Casuists* of the *Roman Church*: Or,
2. *Precipitation* in passing Sentence on a partial Evidence, resolving on some particular advantage of one Cause without considering its disadvantages, or the advantages of the contrary Cause, which might possibly overweigh it if impartially considered: Or,
3. An *undiscernible favour* to one Cause more than another, whereby we wish it rather true in regard of its greater compliance with some particular Interest or Affection, which may be thought *Innocent*, at least, if not *commendable*; which may the more likely prejudice a well-meaning Conscientious Person, because it may indeed be *Prudent* in some Cases, and it is not easie for a Person acted by it to discern when it is not. But it is hard to conceive how any of these mistakes can be *Invincible* in *Revolters*.

Not the 1. for

1. There can be no reason to take up such Opinions so *gratuitously*, which are so Prejudicial to all Reasoning in general.
2. There can be no reason to take them for granted as *first Principles*, without Enquiry, (by which means very *absurd Propositions* may be taken up by very *rational Persons*) where it is known that many skilful, and (as far as can be judged) Conscientious Persons do, not only question, but, deny them.

3. *Revolters* from us cannot as much as pretend any Prejudices of Education to excuse such mistakes, seeing that among Us they find them utterly discountenanced. And as they have thus neither *Reason*, nor (among Us) *Authority* that may induce them to the belief of those Doctrines: So neither,

4. Can the *Authority* of our *Adversaries* be any probable inducement to perswade *Revolters* to the belief of these irrational Doctrines:

1. Because the *Romanists* themselves are sensible of the absurdity of these Doctrines, and their unserviceableness to their own Interests when they have to deal with Persons whom they desire to seduce; so that they are not likely to recommend such Doctrines to such Persons, as Credible, on account of their own Authority. For if they should offer to perswade such as they esteem Hereticks of the unlawfulness of intermedling in Religious Disputes, or following their own Convictions in them, it would be the means to make it impossible to Proselyte such to their own Party.
2. If they should be so imprudent as to perswade them of the Truth of these Doctrines so prejudicial to their own interests in these Circumstances; yet the Person tempted would need no other Argument to confute them than their attempts to Proselyte her at the same time when they should teach her that it were unlawful to hearken to any Reasons, or to venture her own Judgment concerning them, if contrary to what at present she believed to be true.
3. Because if she must not trust her own Judgment, but rely on Authority, it would be most *Just*, as well as most *Prudent*, to trust the Authority of her own Party whom She has experienced, rather than her Adversaries whom She has not; and therefore it could not be reasonable to trust Adversaries contradicting the eminent Guides of her own Party.
4. Because, at least, the Authority of Adversaries cannot be presumed in Reason so great, with a Person not yet of their Communion, as to oblige her to believe, on their account, what She her self thinks Irrational: Nay, rather whilst it is questioned how far their Authority is to be trusted (as it ought, in reason, to be considered before a change) and whilst the *private Judgment* of the Person is trusted (as none else can be) in this debate; what in her own judgment

ſeems unreaſonable, would rather render the Authority ſuſpected if it ſhould recommend it, than be it ſelf believed for the Authority.

Eſpecially conſidering 5. that to ſuch a one as is not yet perſwaded of the Credibility of their *Authority*, this would afford a very prudent Argument for ſuſpicion of their Integrity, when they ſhould urge her to the belief of ſuch things whoſe Truth they would not allow her liberty to examine by her own *private Judgment*.

Not the 2. for

1. It is hard to conceive a Perſon educated in the true Church ſo ignorant of the advantages of her own way, as to be *Invincibly* perſwaded by thoſe of the contrary, which upon a compleat compariſon are (by the Suppoſals laid down in the beginning of this Diſcourſe) ſo very diſproportionable to them, and which may appear ſo by the Judgment of all who are concerned to judg concerning them. * Vid. II. 1, 2.

2. The fallacy of truſting ſuch partial Repreſentations is ſo eaſily diſcovered by the moſt ordinary *Experience* and *Prudence* in human affairs, and ſo univerſally acknowledged in all other ordinary occurrences, as that it can hardly impoſe on any who proceeds with that Caution which all acknowledg requiſite in changes of great and dangerous conſequence, as all confeſs thoſe of Religion to be.

3. Though a leſs advantage on one ſide above the other might ſuffice, where the Perſon were not pre-engaged in either; yet all confeſs the diſturbance of a change, and the danger of venturing on an unexperienced way, ſo conſiderable, as that they are not to be attempted on *barely Equal terms*; which is a further warning for the Gentlewoman to be wary, who is tempted to change from the Principles of her Education.

4. Suppoſing the Perſon were ſo *Ignorant* as not to diſcern the advantages of her own Communion above any other by her own obſervation, yet in that Caſe, it is on all ſides held *Prudent* to hear on both ſides what can be ſaid by them who are *skilful*: which if She underſtand, and be able to judg of by her ſelf, She muſt then (by the Suppoſals now mentioned) ſee the advantage of her own ſide; but if She does not, and ſo be neceſſitated, even in the choice of her Communion, to rely on the conduct of a Guide, it muſt in that Caſe be much more Prudent

to trust a Guide whom She has experienced, than one whom She has not.

Not the 3. for

1. That *Favour* which is wholly derived from the inclination of the *Affections* must needs be due to that side wherein the Person is already engaged: both in *Justice*, as all generous Persons conceive themselves obliged in all Cases capable of favour, to be favourable to their old Friends rather than others; and in *Prudence*, because by this means the disturbance of a change is best prevented.

2. If any *Favour* may be upon reasonable and well-meaning accounts extended to one Cause above others: Either because the trial of its Truth is easier, or because its Truth (if it may be proved) may be conceived subservient to better purposes; as Mr. *Cressy* confesses himself favourable to the Arguments produced for a *Judg of Controversies*, because the decision of that Controversie alone would prevent the trouble of Enquiring into the rest: yet even so (if this Favour be taken up and managed as it ought to be by a vertuous well-meaning Person) it will not render the mistake of a change *Invincible*. For,

* Exomolog. Sect. 2. Ch. 16. Sect. 2. P. 162. Ed. 2.

1. This Favour (as far as it is justifiable by reason) is to be had for the Religion *wherein the Person had been educated*, and of which She is actually possessed, upon the same rational accounts whereby that other Favour is conceived justifiable, and in as high a degree of obligation; both as we are better able to judg of what we know already, than we can be presumed to be of a strange Religion; and as we can be more confident in the practice of a Religion we have always maintained, than we can in that which must suppose us convicted of having been formerly greatly mistaken.

2. This Favour, as far as it may be conceived *Prudent* and *Rational*, can only take place there where all other things are supposed Equal, which cannot be supposed in the true way.

3. This Favour ought not to hinder the Person from an *Enquiry* into the contrary Cause, unless the Evidence produced be very certainly convictive, which also cannot be supposed in the way we are speaking of.

4. This way of Favourable Presumption being the only way by which the generality of the Vulgar are capable to Judg,

and

and there being in the true way inducements for all ſorts of People; therefore it muſt be ſaid that if this way be managed impartially, that is, if all the Preſumptions on both ſides be conſidered, this muſt bring them to the Truth.

Hence it follows, by the Principles of all Parties, that the Error of a *Revolter* can hardly be preſumed *Invincible*, and conſequently not *wholly Excuſable*. So that for Judging concerning the Salvability of particular Perſons, it only remains to be enquired further, *Whether they be capable of ſuch a degree of* Vincible Ignorance *as may be expiable by a* General Repentance, *and the performance of all other Conditions of the Goſpel in an Erroneous Communion?* And the Reſolution of this depends on theſe Enquiries:

1. Whether the *Erroneous Communion* (the *Roman* for Example) embrace the Doctrine of *Repentance* ſo intirely, according to the Conditions required of it in the Goſpel, as that the Repentance performed in it may be preſumed ſuch as God will accept?
2. What degree of *Vincible Ignorance* is expiable by a *General Repentance?* For it is certain that all is not.
3. Whether a *Revolter* from our Communion be capable of that degree of *Vincible Ignorance* which is ſo expiable?

The exact Diſcuſſion of theſe things is too large to be inſiſted on at preſent, and therefore I ſhall only make application to the deſign of the Queſtion. I ſhall therefore ſhew that what *Poſſibility of Salvation* ſoever we may allow to Perſons of the *Roman Communion*, yet it is no prudent ground to encourage one who is not already of it, to *revolt* to it. To this purpoſe I deſire it may be conſidered,

1. That all the grounds we pretend to have for our Charity, are rather *Negative* than *Poſitive:* rather our unſatisfiedneſs with thoſe Arguments which pretend to prove them *actually damned*, than any Poſitive Convictions that any of them are *actually ſaved*.

2. That our *Charitable Preſumptions* are principally grounded on things impoſſible to be known by *Us*, ſuch as are the *Uncovenanted Mercies* of God, and the *poſſibility of Sincerity*, and even *particular Explicite Repentance* of the *Error* in the *Perſon*; ſo that it is very eaſie for *Us* to be miſtaken in our *Charity*, and we profeſſedly chuſe it as a *miſtake* (if it ſhould prove one) more pardonable than *Cenſoriouſneſs*.

3. That

3. That the Case, concerning which we Judge *Charitably*, is so very *rare* and *extraordinary*, as that no particular *Erroneous Person* can be very confident that it is her own: Nay, when we say, that their Errors are of their *own Nature* destructive of Salvation, and that God has not interposed any *General Ordinary means* for preventing their proving actually damnative in the *Event*, it will thence follow that there are very just fears concerning the generality of their Communion, and consequently many odds to one of the miscarriage of each particular Person, which the Gentlewoman may do well to think of seriously.

4. That the degree of *Penitence* which shall be accepted by God in a particular Case, upon account of his *uncovenanted Mercy*, is very *hard*, if not *impossible*, to be known by the Person concerned; so that even they who shall enjoy the *benefit* of it in the other World, yet may want the *comfort* of it in this; and therefore can ground no confidence in any *Practice* undertaken on that Supposition.

5. That this Security is very much more hazardous, and more difficult to be Judged of, in Case of *Vincible*, than of *Invincible Ignorance*, which has been proved to be generally the condition of Persons concerned in this Enquiry.

6. That it is certainly more difficult in the Case of *Revolters*, than of such who have had their *Education* in the *Roman Communion*.

These things I conceive sufficient to shew that our acknowledgment in this affair can afford no security for a *Revolt*, to a Person who seriously believes Us, and is desirous to be Guided by Us. But if we be considered as *Adversaries*, and consequently our Authority be considered only as cogent against our Selves, especially when taken in conjunction with other things, as they usually argue the Security of a change from our *Singularity* in Asserting the Salvability of our own Communion, and our *Agreement* even with the *Romanists* in owning the Salvability of theirs; whence they conclude it safer for an *Ignorant Person* to venture her Practice in that way, in the safety whereof we are all *agreed*, than in that wherein we are *singular*: In Answer hereunto I shall, at present, only propose these things to the Gentlewomans Consideration:

1. That the unreasonableness of this Argument has been sufficiently shown by others; particularly She may consult Bishop

shop *Taylor*'s Letter, and the Dean of *Canterbury*'s Sermon, which are in *English*, and are short and easie to be understood by her. On 1 Cor. III. 15.

2. That the Supposition it self is false here. For they of the *Roman* Communion do as fully own the Possibility of the Salvation of particular Persons in our Communion, as we do in theirs, both as to the Principles whence it is deduced, (touching *Invincible Ignorance*) which are granted as well by them as by Us, and even in express Confessions, when they are pleased to speak their minds freely; of which I must needs say, they are in Policy more cautious, for fear of giving Us any encouragement to continue in our own Communion. If She doubt of this, She may, if She please, consult of our *English* Authors (for in dealing with her I would not willingly quote any others) Mr. *Richworth* Dialog. 1. §. 7. pag. 38. Ed. *Paris*, 1648. Mr. *Cressy* Exomolog. Sect. 2. Chap. 50. §. 11. pag. 396. *Knot* in *Charity Maintained*, Part I. Chap. I. §. 3, 4. compared with Mr. *Chillingworth*'s Answer, Ib. §. 3, 4.

3. That this *Candor* of ours, when compared with their *reservedness* in speaking their minds in this Case, is an Argument of our *Ingenuity* and *fair dealing* more than theirs, which is a considerable Argument of trust to an *Ignorant Person*, who finds her self obliged to trust the Authority of one of Us.

Q. 2. *Whether they be Idolaters, or No?*

I Must confess that I think the true Notion of *Idolatry* more difficult than is commonly conceived, and to my Understanding not yet sufficiently explained. Nor am I willing on this occasion to engage on that Dispute, both because it would be too tedious, and because I think most of the mistakes already entertained concerning it to have been occasioned by its having been stated in *Disputes* with a design on some *particular Adversaries*. Not intending therefore to determine *positively*, Whether the *Practices required* by their Church as *Conditions of her Communion be necessarily Idolatrous?* I shall only, at present, recommend these things to a Person in the Gentlewomans Condition, whom I suppose not so capable of examining the particular *merit of the Cause*, and therefore it will be the most Prudent course for such a one to Judge by general Presumptions.

1. That their Notions concerning the *Saints* are exactly the same

ſame with thoſe of the later *Heathens* of the Primitive times concerning their *Dæmons* then worſhipped; who yet were as certainly guilty of *Idolatry* (if the concurrent ſenſe of *Primitive Chriſtianity* may be believed) as thoſe accuſed of it in the Old Teſtament, concerning whoſe ſenſe we want thoſe Records which might ſo fully inform us. For it might have eaſily been ſhewn, that thoſe *Dæmons* were confeſſed to be of an inferior Order, and not to require that ſupreme degree of Worſhip proper to the *Supreme Being*; nay, that they thought them deputed by the *Supreme Being* it ſelf to convey his influences to *Us*, and our Prayers to *Him*.

2. That if the *Heathens* (notwithſtanding that their Devotions were deſigned for *good Dæmons*) were yet deluded by *Evil ones*, who were by God permitted to interpoſe in their ſtead, becauſe they paid that *Relative reſpect* to Perſons whom he had not declared it his pleaſure to have ſo worſhipped, and before *Images* where they had no ſecurity from any promiſe of God, that none but *good Dæmons* ſhould preſentiate themſelves; How can the *Romaniſts* be ſecure that they are not the ſame way deluded, ſeeing they have as little Security from God's Word (which is the only competent means from whence they can in this Caſe have *Security*) that it is his pleaſure that they ſhould be *publickly Invocated*, and that he has given them the Office of conveying his Bleſſings to Us, and our Prayers to Him, and that he will permit none but *good Spirits* to preſentiate themſelves at their *Images*?

3. That if *Miracles* pretended to be done at ſuch *Invocations* be urged as Arguments that God is pleaſed with them, this was pretended by the *Heathens* too. And it may be, if it were impartially Enquired into, there would not be *greater* and *better atteſted Miracles* for *Invocation of Saints* among the *Romaniſts*, than for the *Invocation of Dæmons* among the *Pagans*.

4. That the ſame Arguments uſed by the *Scriptures* and *Primitive Chriſtians* againſt the *Heathen Idolatries*, are applied by the *Proteſtants* to the *Image-worſhip* among the *Papiſts* now; and the ſame Anſwers given by the *Papiſts* now, were then alſo inſiſted on by the *Pagans*.

5. That as theſe are very ſhrewd Suſpicions of the *dangerouſneſs* of this Worſhip, ſo this *danger* is ventured on without the leaſt *neceſſity*; there being undeniable Security from the Primitive Records

Records and Revelations of *Chriſtianity*, that God is pleaſed to accept ſuch Prayers as are addreſſed to him through the Interceſſion of *Chriſt* alone, ſo that there can be no neceſſity of having alſo recourſe unto the *Saints*.

6. That *Image-worſhip* is not countenanced by as much as any *Venerable Authority* of truly Primitive *Chriſtianity*, and that the Second *Nicæne* Council that introduced it, was put to very diſingenuous Shifts of *counterfeit Authorities* for it.

7. That whatever may be thought of the Worſhip deſigned by the *Roman Church*, yet even Mr. *Thorndike* himſelf (with whoſe Authority our Adverſaries principally urge us in this Diſpute) does not deny that *Idolatry* is practiced by the *Ignoranter Perſons* of that Communion, which the Gentlewoman may juſtly fear, leſt it ſhould prove her own Caſe.

8. That the *Roman Church* her ſelf cannot be altogether excuſed from the *Idolatry* of her *Ignorant Communicants*, ſeeing ſhe puts unneceſſary Scandals in Ignorant perſons way, and is guilty of encouraging their *Ignorance* and *Careleſneſs* of *Judging* in matters of Religion.

9. That the *Practice* of that Communion is generally worſe and groſſer than their *Principles* (as the Gentlewoman may inform her ſelf of, in that impartial account which is given of them by Sir *Edwyn Sandys* in his *Speculum Europæ*) which yet is obſerved and countenanced by their moſt *Eminent Guides*; ſo that ſuch as She cannot ſecure themſelves from the danger of it.

10. That the *Romiſh Church* is by ſo much the more culpable in this Particular, becauſe She has not been content only to *countenance* and encourage a *Practice* in ſo great danger of proving *Idolatrous*, ſo needleſs in it ſelf, ſo deſtitute of all Authority, either of Scripture or the Primitive Catholick Church (which yet does ſo extremely ſtand in need of Authority;) but She has alſo impoſed it as a *Condition* of her own *Communion* (which She calls *Catholick*) ſo that they who are willing to *Believe* and *Practice* all that was *Believed* and *Practiſed* in the *Primitive Church*, muſt now be *Anathematized* and condemned for *Hereticks* for refuſing to *Believe* or *Practice* any more, or to condemn thoſe as *Hereticks* who do refuſe it.

Q. 3. *Where was the Church of* England *before* Luther's *time.*

THE design of asking this Question is certainly to make our Confession of *Novelty* (in such Cases wherein our Adversaries presume our *Novelty* so notorious as that we our Selves cannot deny it) an Argument against Us; yet they themselves are concerned in some Cases to deny its cogency. For even they cannot deny that the deprivation of the *Laity* of the use of the *Cup* (for Example) has been lately introduced into their Church by a *publick Law.* If therefore it may appear that *our Church* is *Ancient* as to all intents and purposes wherein *Antiquity* may be available, but that the *Church of Rome* is not so; and that in the sense wherein the *Church of England* has begun since *Luther*, there is no reason to expect that She should have been *Ancienter*, and that the *Justice* of her *Cause* does not require it; and that the *Antiquity* upon these Suppositions confessedly allowed to the *Church of Rome* is no Argument for the *Justice* of her *Cause*: these things, I think, will contain a fully satisfactory Answer to the Gentlewomans Question. I shall not at present engage on an accurate Discussion of these Heads: but shall only suggest such short Observations as may let her see how unreasonable our Adversaries confidence is in this Argument, wherein they do so usually triumph. Therefore,

1. *Antiquity* is indeed necessary to be pleaded for *Doctrines*, such especially as are pretended to belong to the *Catholick Faith*, and which are urged as *Conditions of Communion.* This is the Case wherein it is urged by *Tertullian* and *Vincentius Lirinensis* in their very rational Discourses on this Argument. And for this, I think, we may challenge the *Church of Rome* her self to instance in one *positive Doctrine* imposed by us which She her self thinks not *Ancient.* I am sure the Controversie is so stated commonly, that we are blamed, not for Believing any thing *ancient* or *necessary* which is not, but, for not believing some things which She believes to be so. And if She her self believe all our *Positives*, and withal believes that nothing is so to be believed but what is *Ancient*; it will clearly follow that She cannot, in consistency with her own interests, deny the *Antiquity* of our *Positive Doctrines.* But for the other *Doctrines superadded* by them, and denied by us, which are indeed the true occasion of the present Divisions of

 Com-

Communion, we charge them with *Innovation*, and are very confident that they will never be able to prove them, to the ſatisfaction of any Impartial Perſon, either from clear Scripture, or from *genuine Antiquity* of the *firſt* and *pureſt Ages*, which are the way wherein we are willing to undertake the proof of our *poſitive Doctrines*. Nay, their greateſt Champions decline the trial, and complain of the defectiveneſs and obſcurity of the Primitive Chriſtian Writers, which they would not have reaſon to do if they thought them clear on their ſide.

Theſe things therefore being thus ſuppoſed, *That no Doctrines ought to be impoſed but what are* Ancient; *That ours are ſo by our Adverſaries own Confeſſion, and that our Adverſaries Doctrines are not ſo; and that in Judging this, the* private Judgments *of* particular Perſons *are to be truſted, as the meaſures of their own private Practice* (as it is plain that thoſe Diſcourſes of *Tertullian* and *Vincentius Lirinenſis* are principally deſigned for the ſatisfaction of *particular Perſons*, which had been impertinent if the *Churches Judgment* had been thought Credible in her own Caſe, as a *Judg of Controverſies*; beſides that even now this Argument from *Antiquity* is made uſe of for convincing ſuch as are ſuppoſed unſatisfied with her *Authority*, and therefore to whom that *Authority* can be no *Argument*) *which Liberty of* Private Judgment *is then eſpecially moſt fit to be indulged when the diſtance is ſo remote as it is now, when no Church has now thoſe Advantages for conveying down Apoſtolical Tradition in a Hiſtorical way as She had then:* Theſe things, I ſay, being thus ſuppoſed, it will follow that we are wrongfully Excommunicated, and therefore that we have no reaſon to fear that their Cenſures ſhould be confirmed by God. And though I confeſs every Error in the *Cauſe* of the Churches Cenſures will not excuſe the *Cenſured Perſon* for continuing out of her Communion, when the Communion may be recovered by any *Submiſſion*, how *inconvenient* and *harſh* ſoever, if it be not *ſinful*; yet that is the very Caſe here, that we are not only *wrongfully* Excommunicated, but the terms propoſed for our reſtitution to Communion would be *directly ſinful*, as has been ſhewn before. Whence it will follow that we are *excuſable*, not only in ſuffering our Selves to be *caſt out* of their Communion, but alſo in *continuing* out of it. But becauſe this is not our whole Caſe, who do not only *abſtain* from their Communion, but *ſet up* a Communion of our own, and maintain an *Eccleſiaſtical Body Politick* diſtinct from theirs; our

Vid. Q. I. Sect. I.

our defence herein will depend on the *Justice* of the *Ecclesiastical Power* of those Persons who govern our *Ecclesiastical Assemblies*. And therefore,

2. All our concernment for *Antiquity* here will be, that our *Bishops* derived their power from such as derived theirs with a power of communicating it in a *continual Succession* from the *Apostles*. And this we do acknowledg true concerning the *Popish Bishops* themselves, and do derive the validity of our Orders from the *Antiquity* of theirs without any more prejudice to our *Cause* than the *Primitive Catholicks* did suffer by acknowledging the *validity of Baptism* administred by *Hereticks*. For the *Succession* of their *Pastors* is very reconcilable with a supposed *Innovation* in their *Doctrines* (and certainly themselves cannot deny that it is so, whilst they charge the *Orientals* with *Heresie*, whom yet they cannot deny to have always maintained as uninterrupted a *Succession of Bishops* as themselves) especially considering that the *Innovations* we charge them with, of *adding false* and *new* Articles of Faith, not of *denying* the *old* ones, do not in the least *interrupt* or *invalidate* their *Succession*. This therefore being supposed, that the first *Bishops* of our *English Reformation* received their power from such as had derived theirs by an uninterrupted Succession from the *Apostles*; it will follow that they were *valid Bishops*, and if so, had the power of keeping *Church-Assemblies*, and exercising *Jurisdiction* in them, both for the Government of their present Charges, and communicating their power to succeeding Generations. For nothing of this is pretended to exceed the power of a *valid Bishop*. The charge of *Heresie* it self cannot hinder the *validity* of their *Orders* either *received* or *communicated*; though it may indeed, in the Judgment of them who believe them so, render them obnoxious to *Canonical Incapacities* of executing them, and to *Legal Degradations*, not from the *Character*, but from the *actual Jurisdiction* properly belonging to their Office. But to such *Canonical Incapacities* and *Degradations*, they will not deny even *validly-Ordained* Persons themselves to be obnoxious, and therefore cannot make that an Argument against the *validity* of our *Orders*. And yet even this Charge of *Heresie* against our *Bishops* is not here to be Judged by the *pretences* of our *Adversaries*, but by the *merit* of the Cause; and therefore is not to be taken for granted till it be proved.

That therefore which is indeed new in the *Church of England*, is, that though her *Positive Doctrines* and *Orders* be *Ancient*, yet the *Profession* of her *Negatives*, and the *open Assertion* of her *Liberty* from the Encroachments of the *Roman Court*, and all her other *Practices* grounded on these *Principles*, were not avowed by her Ecclesiastical Governours for several Centuries before the *Reformation*. And in Answer hereunto I shall insist on the Heads already intimated. Therefore,

1. There was no reason to expect that her opposition to these Errors should have been *Ancienter*, though we should suppose the Errors themselves to have been so. For there was no reason to expect that Errors should have been discovered for some Ages before the *Reformation*, when there was so great a want of that kind of *Grammatical* and *Historical Learning* which is only fit to qualifie a Person to Judg of *Ecclesiastical Tradition*; at least, they were not likely to have been discovered by such a number as had been requisite to maintain an open opposition. And if the Errors had been discovered, yet it was not easie to expect success in holding out against the *Court* of *Rome*, which was then so very powerful, and there was no reason to expect such attempts from *Prudent Persons* where there was no probability of success. And there was yet least reason of all to expect this opposition from *Bishops* then, when no *Bishops* were made without the *Popes* consent, which he was not likely to give to such as were likely to oppose him; when, after they were made, they were obliged to be true to Him by express *Oaths*, as well as by their *Interests* of peaceable continuance, or hopes of future preferment; when, at least, it was impossible to resist their *Fellow Bishops*, the generality of whom were, in all likelihood, swayed by these Prejudices; when they had seen mighty *Princes* themselves worsted in those Contests, and the extreme Severity of that Court against Dissenters; when, lastly, differing from the *Church of Rome* in any thing was counted *Heresie*, and *Heresie* was prosecuted with the extremest *Infamy* (which must needs weaken the Authority of those Opposers with others) as well as other Penalties of the *Canon Law*. Nor,

2. Does the *Justice* of our *Cause* require a greater *Antiquity* for our *Negatives*: For,

1. Our *Negatives* are not pretended to be of perpetual obligation, but only for preventing the malignity of the contrary *Affirma-*

our defence herein will depend on the *Justice* of the *Ecclesiastical Power* of those Persons who govern our *Ecclesiastical Assemblies*. And therefore,

2. All our concernment for *Antiquity* here will be, that our *Bishops* derived their power from such as derived theirs with a power of communicating it in a *continual Succession* from the *Apostles*. And this we do acknowledg true concerning the *Popish Bishops* themselves, and do derive the validity of our Orders from the *Antiquity* of theirs without any more prejudice to our *Cause* than the *Primitive Catholicks* did suffer by acknowledging the *validity of Baptism* administred by *Hereticks*. For the *Succession* of their *Pastors* is very reconcilable with a supposed *Innovation* in their *Doctrines* (and certainly themselves cannot deny that it is so, whilst they charge the *Orientals* with *Heresie*, whom yet they cannot deny to have always maintained as uninterrupted a *Succession of Bishops* as themselves) especially considering that the *Innovations* we charge them with, of *adding false* and *new* Articles of Faith, not of *denying* the *old* ones, do not in the least *interrupt* or *invalidate* their *Succession*. This therefore being supposed, that the first *Bishops* of our *English Reformation* received their power from such as had derived theirs by an uninterrupted Succession from the *Apostles*; it will follow that they were *valid Bishops*, and if so, had the power of keeping *Church-Assemblies*, and exercising *Jurisdiction* in them, both for the Government of their present Charges, and communicating their power to succeeding Generations. For nothing of this is pretended to exceed the power of a *valid Bishop*. The charge of *Heresie* it self cannot hinder the *validity* of their *Orders* either *received* or *communicated*; though it may indeed, in the Judgment of them who believe them so, render them obnoxious to *Canonical Incapacities* of executing them, and to *Legal Degradations*, not from the *Character*, but from the *actual Jurisdiction* properly belonging to their Office. But to such *Canonical Incapacities* and *Degradations*, they will not deny even *validly-Ordained* Persons themselves to be obnoxious, and therefore cannot make that an Argument against the *validity* of our *Orders*. And yet even this Charge of *Heresie* against our *Bishops* is not here to be Judged by the *pretences* of our *Adversaries*, but by the *merit* of the Cause; and therefore is not to be taken for granted till it be proved.

That therefore which is indeed new in the *Church of England*, is, that though her *Poſitive Doctrines* and *Orders* be *Ancient*, yet the *Profeſſion* of her *Negatives*, and the *open Aſſertion* of her *Liberty* from the Encroachments of the *Roman Court*, and all her other *Practices* grounded on theſe *Principles*, were not avowed by her Eccleſiaſtical Governours for ſeveral Centuries before the *Reformation*. And in Anſwer hereunto I ſhall inſiſt on the Heads already intimated. Therefore,

1. There was no reaſon to expect that her oppoſition to theſe Errors ſhould have been *Ancienter*, though we ſhould ſuppoſe the Errors themſelves to have been ſo. For there was no reaſon to expect that Errors ſhould have been diſcovered for ſome Ages before the *Reformation*, when there was ſo great a want of that kind of *Grammatical* and *Hiſtorical Learning* which is only fit to qualifie a Perſon to Judg of *Eccleſiaſtical Tradition*; at leaſt, they were not likely to have been diſcovered by ſuch a number as had been requiſite to maintain an open oppoſition. And if the Errors had been diſcovered, yet it was not eaſie to expect ſucceſs in holding out againſt the *Court* of *Rome*, which was then ſo very powerful, and there was no reaſon to expect ſuch attempts from *Prudent Perſons* where there was no probability of ſucceſs. And there was yet leaſt reaſon of all to expect this oppoſition from *Biſhops* then, when no *Biſhops* were made without the *Popes* conſent, which he was not likely to give to ſuch as were likely to oppoſe him; when, after they were made, they were obliged to be true to Him by expreſs *Oaths*, as well as by their *Intereſts* of peaceable continuance, or hopes of future preferment; when, at leaſt, it was impoſſible to reſiſt their *Fellow Biſhops*, the generality of whom were, in all likelihood, ſwayed by theſe Prejudices; when they had ſeen mighty *Princes* themſelves worſted in thoſe Conteſts, and the extreme Severity of that Court againſt Diſſenters; when, laſtly, differing from the *Church of Rome* in any thing was counted *Hereſie*, and *Hereſie* was proſecuted with the extremeſt *Infamy* (which muſt needs weaken the Authority of thoſe Oppoſers with others) as well as other Penalties of the *Canon Law*. Nor,

2. Does the *Juſtice* of our *Cauſe* require a greater *Antiquity* for our *Negatives*: For,

1. Our *Negatives* are not pretended to be of perpetual obligation, but only for preventing the malignity of the contrary *Affirma-*

Affirmative Articles to which they are opposed. And therefore there is no reason to expect *Formal Negatives* opposed to *Additional Articles* from the beginning, before the *Additional Articles* themselves were thought of; nor to expect a *Reformation* of *Abuses* before there were *Abuses* to be *Reformed*, seeing that in course of Nature these *Negatives* presuppose the contrary *Affirmatives*, as a pretence of *Reformation* must also presuppose *Abuses*. And therefore the pretence of the greater *Antiquity* of our Adversaries *Errors* and *Abuses* is so far from prejudicing the reputation of our *Negatives* and *Reformation*, as that it is indeed the best Argument of their *Justice* and *Seasonableness*. For such *Negatives* as these, and such a *Reformation*, must needs have been unwarrantable, if there had not been before *Errors* fit to be denied, and *Abuses* fit to be *reformed*. Nor,

2. Is it any Prejudice to the *Justice* of our *Cause*, that these Errors were not opposed with *formal Negatives* as soon as they appeared. For such Errors as these were usually first received as the Opinions of *private Persons* before they were countenanced by *Authority*; and whilst they proceeded no further, there was not that mischief in them, nor consequently that obligation to oppose them, as when at length they came to be so countenanced. For the Errors of *Private Persons*, whilst they are no more, are not conceived so to oblige us to be of their mind, as that our *silence* should in any Prudence be expounded as an Argument of our *consent*; and consequently cannot be such a provocation to us to oppose them openly in our own Defence. Nor,

3. Is it necessary to expect that there should have been an open opposition of them, even as soon as countenanced by *Authority*. For if even in the reproof of the miscarriages of *private Persons*, Christianity obliges us to proceed with all possible *candor* and *modesty*; we are certainly much rather obliged to proceed so in dealing with Persons of *Authority*. We should give them time to reflect, and we should bear with any Personal inconveniences that are not directly sinful; rather than occasion those disturbances which are usually to be expected from a publick opposition of them. Nor is this forbearance more agreeable to *reason*, than to the *sentiments* of those Ages who were generally possessed with

with an exceſſive veneration for *Authority*, eſpecially *Eccleſiaſtical*; ſo that there is reaſon to believe that they would bear with ſuch *Errors* as long as the *Abuſes* were tolerable, however otherwiſe *inconvenient*.

4. Therefore that which makes theſe *Errors intolerable* to *private Perſons* in dealing with *Authority* (for of ſuch I ſpeak) is the *impoſing* and *urging* them as *Conditions* of *Communion*. And this might have been ſhewn to have been late, not before their *Errors* were *defined* and *impoſed* in their *Councils*. And therefore it was but lately that any publick oppoſition was to be expected, even from them who were in their Conſciences perſwaded that our Adverſaries Doctrines were *Erroneous*. And,

5. When they were thus *impoſed*, yet even then *private Perſons* were concerned, in *Conſcience* as well as *Prudence*, to forbear an open oppoſition, when there were no hopes of *doing good*, nay too probable fears of prejudicing their Cauſe by it for the future: when upon their oppoſition, they muſt have expected to have been *condemned*; when being condemned, they were to be caſt out of *Communion*; when being Excommunicated for ſuch a Cauſe, others would have been *deterred* by their Example, and their *credit* muſt have been impaired by the *Infamy* incurred by the *Canon-Law* then in force, and their very *condemnation* would for the future mightily prejudice Mens minds againſt the like attempts, when none could revive the like true Doctrine without the diſrepute of being ſuppoſed to revive an anciently-condemned *Hereſie*; and when there were no hopes of being able to preſerve themſelves in *oppoſite Aſſemblies* without *Biſhops* to Head them, without whom they could not maintain a *Succeſſion* of *Prieſts*, nor conſequently of *Sacraments*, and the like employments and advantages of *Eccleſiaſtical Aſſemblies*; and when no *Biſhops* were likely to countenance ſuch a deſign, whilſt they were held in ſuch captivity to the *Court* of *Rome* by Oaths as well as their other Worldly Intereſts, and when no Perſons of a free ingenuous temper were likely to attain the honour of *Epiſcopacy*.

Theſe Reaſons, with a very eaſie Application, may ſuffice to ſhew that in an *ordinary way* there was no reaſon to expect the Reforma-

Reformation sooner than it was. And that there was no necessity sufficient to oblige God to interpose to raise Men up to it *Extraordinarily*, will appear if it be considered,

6. That it is not every necessity of the Church that can oblige God to use such *Extraordinary means*, but only such a necessity as must have destroyed a Church *from the Earth*, that is, such a Society of Men wherein Salvation might be attained by the *ordinary Prescriptions* of the *Gospel*. Now the prevalency of these *Errors* does not oblige us to acknowledg that such a *Church* as this must have failed even in those *Ages* wherein these *Errors* are supposed to have prevailed for some Centuries before the *Reformation:* For,

1. Though the *Occidental Church* had failed, yet *Christ* might have had such a *Church* among the several Communions of the *Orientals*. And I know no greater inconvenience, in this regard, in admitting the faileur of the *Occidental Church*, than what our Adversaries themselves are obnoxious to, in admitting the like defection in the *Oriental*.

2. The prevailing of these Errors does not oblige us to deny an *ordinary possibility* of *Salvation* according to the Prescriptions of the Gospel, even in the *Church of Rome* it self in those Centuries before the Reformation: For,

1. We do not deny all *Necessaries* to *Salvation*, even according to the *ordinary Prescriptions* of the *Gospel*, to have been taught even then in the *Church of Rome*. The *Errors* we charge them with, are not of *Defect*, but *Adding* to the *Original Articles* of *Faith*. And therefore,

2. If it may appear that the sin of *Adding* to the *Faith* was not (to such as were no farther accessary to it than by continuing in the Communion of such as were really guilty of it) so imputable *ordinarily* as to hinder the Salvation of such as were not otherwise wanting to themselves in their own Endeavours; or at least not in such a degree as to oblige God to interpose in an *Extraordinary* way for its *Ordinary* prevention: this will be sufficient to shew that (supposing those *Errors* so *dangerous* as we do indeed suppose them, yet) God was not obliged to raise up, and maintain a *Communion* in opposition to them for preventing the failing of such a *Church* as I have spoken of, even in these *Western Parts*. And that this was so, may appear from these Considerations: 1. That

1. That that skill in *Ecclesiastical Learning*, by which our first Reformers were enabled to discover these *Errors*, was generally wanting in the Ages before the Reformation, which might make their mistakes then much more pardonable than now.

2. That the great mischief of these *Errors* is, not so much the believing more for matters of Faith than really was so, as the mischievous Consequence of doing so, the *Divisions* of the *Church* necessarily following hereupon, the *condemning* of good *Catholicks* for *Hereticks* and *Schismaticks*, and *excluding* them from *Communion*, and hereby making the *Peace* of *Christendom* impossible on any just and tolerable terms, and *Abuses* impossible to be *Reformed*. Which was not so imputable in those Ages when there was no *visible Communion* to be condemned by joyning with that of *Rome*; for as for the even unjust Excommunication of *particular Persons*, Providence is not so concerned as to interpose *Extraordinarily* for their Prevention. This I say on Supposition that the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, &c. were such as our Adversaries represent them. If they were otherwise, then among them there was a *Succession*, for so long, of *Churches* holding our Doctrines before *Luther*.

3. The *Prudential Reasons* now given might then generally excuse *private Persons*, and all such as were not accessary to the guilt of introducing those Errors (who were much the *greater Part*, and it is only for the greater Part that Providence is necessarily concerned) from the guilt of not *publickly Reforming* them. Yet even they are not so Excusable now, when the power of the Pope is so much decried, and there are so many *Churches* and *Church-Governours*, under whose Protection they may put themselves, and with whose Communion they may joyn, in opposition to them.

3. The *Antiquity* allowed to their Errors on this Supposition is not sufficient to justifie their Cause. For,

1. This *Antiquity* is not *Primitive*, but only of some later Ignorant Ages. And the Unreasonableness of presuming Doctrines to have been *Primitive* only, because they were actually found embraced by the *Church* in *later Ages*, and of Prescribing on that account against a new Examination of them by immediate re-

course to the *Originals*, might have been shewn from the *Fathers* as well as from the *Protestants*.

2. The *Antiquity* of those Notions of theirs, whereby they confine the *Catholick Church* to that part of it in the *Roman Communion* (which might have been proved Fundamental to all their other Doctrines, as they are made Articles of Faith and Conditions of Communion) is contradicted by the *Oriental Churches* generally, who are as *ancient*, and of as Unquestionable a *Succession*, as the *Church of Rome* her self, and as *ancient* in teaching the contrary.

3. The utmost *Antiquity* which we allow for their unwarrantable *Doctrines*, is not so great as must be acknowledged (by all that will Judg candidly) for several, which on all sides are acknowledged to be *Heretical*, I do not only mean those of the *Arians*, but also of those great Bodies of the *Oriental Historians* and *Eutychians*, continuing to this day divided from the *Roman Church*; especially if they be really guilty of those *Heresies* which are charged on them; and they must by *Romanists* be held guilty of some, for Justifying their own Practice of *condemning* them.

4. Some of their present Decrees (particularly those concerning the admission of the *Apocryphal* Books into the *Canon*, and receiving *Unwritten Traditions* with *Equal Reverence* with the *Written Word of God*) I doubt are not more *anciently* imposed, as *Conditions* of *Catholick Communion*, than the Council of *Trent* it self, which was since *Luther*. And both of these are very considerable, and especially the latter is very Fundamental to many of their other Decrees.

Q. 4. *Why all the* Reformed Churches *are not United in One?*

I Presume the design of this Question is not so much a *Curiosity* to be informed, either of the *Politick Reasons* which in the Course of *Second Causes* might have an Influence on those Divisions which were occasioned by the *Reformation*; or of those that might move *God* to permit *Second Causes* to act according to their Natural Inclination, without the Interposition of any *Extraordinary* restraint: but only to lay hold on that Advantage from our acknowledged *Divisions*, which they may seem to afford to the

Prejudice of our common *Cause*. I shall therefore at present only propose such things to the Gentlewomans Consideration, as may let her understand the weakness of this Argument (how Popular soever) when they conclude us either mistaken our Selves, or, at least, unfit to Guide others in the *General Reformation*; because we are not all agreed in all the *Particulars*.

To this purpose it will be at present sufficient to insist on two things: 1. That there is no reason why the *Romanists* should upbraid Us with this Argument, and that it is their Interest, as well as ours, to Answer it: 2. That the Argument it self is of no force as it is used by them against us.

1. *There is no Reason why the* Romanists *should upbraid Us with this Argument, and they, as well as we, are obliged to Answer it.* For,

1. This very Argument was by the *Primitive Heathens* made use of against *Christianity* in General, as it is now against Us; and our Adversaries would do well to consider, whether the same Answers pleadable by themselves now in behalf of those *Christians*, and actually pleaded by the *Apologists* then, be not as pleadable for Us now. Nay, this multitude of Sects in *Christianity* is even now the great Argument of Irreligious Persons against the Truth of *Religion*; and I cannot believe that any Piously disposed Person among them, can be pleased to allow the Argument to be of any force in either Case, rather than want an Argument against Us. Yet I believe they will never be able to shew any Disparity.

2. If they speak, not of *Dividing Principles*, but of *actual Divisions*, they, as well as we, have such among themselves. They have *Divisions* betwixt the *Irish Remonstrants* and *Anti-Remonstrants*, *Molinists* and *Jansenists*, as well as *Thomists* and *Scotists*, and *Jesuites*, some of which Parties are Divided as well in *Communion* as in *Opinions*. If they say that these Divisions are not the faults of their Opinions, but the particular perversity of Persons, who will not stick to those *Principles* which might keep them *United*; when their Interest inclines them otherwise: the same will be pretended by every *Dividing Party*. If they think it Injurious that their whole *Communion* should be charged with the misdemeanors of *Persons* condemned by it; We all of Us plead the same, for there is no Party that does not condemn all others in those things wherein they Divide from themselves.

3. If they think our Differences concerning the *Particulars* we would have *Reformed*, an Argument that the whole design of a *Reformation* is in it self Suspicious and Uncertain; let them consider what themselves do or can say, when they are, in the like way of Arguing, urged by Us with the several Opinions concerning the *Seat* of *Infallibility*; whence our Authors conclude the Uncertainty of the thing it self. It might easily have been shewn, upon this and the like Occasions, how they do, and are obliged to, acknowledg the Unreasonableness of this way of Arguing. But the designed Brevity of my present Employment only permits me to point at the Heads of what might be said, not to enlarge on the Particulars.

4. It might have been shewn that these Differences among them concerning the Judg of Controversies, tend *Naturally*, and by due *Rational Consequence*, to the dissolution of their *Communion*, a Charge which we think cannot be proved against that which we believe the Right Communion.

2. Therefore, *to shew directly the weakness of this Argument*, Let it be considered,

1. That whatever Differences they upbraid us with, yet they can never prove that they follow by any *Natural* and *Rational Consequence*, from the General *Principles* of the *Reformation*, though possibly they may indeed have been *occasioned* by that Liberty of Spirit which was absolutely requisite for undertaking a design of such a Nature; as it must on all sides be acknowledged possible that things really *good* may notwithstanding prove *occasions* of *Evil*. And how very Unjust and Unreasonable it is to charge *Personal Faults* upon *Designs* (that is in this Case the faults of *Reformers* upon the *Reformation*) all, even the *Romanists* themselves, will acknowledg, in Cases wherein they are disinterested.

2. That, this being Supposed, all that they can conclude from these *Divisions* of the *Reformers*, is only, that no one Communion of the *Reformers* has that advantage over the rest as that, Antecedently to all Enquiry into the merit of the Cause, its Word is fit to be trusted as a Guide in Controversies, to assure any of its own Truth, and of the Error of all differing from it. This, if the Gentlewoman will observe, she will find that their Arguments from this and the like Topicks, only aim at. For because they challenge such a Privileg themselves, they fancy Us to do so too; and that our design is not to *overthrow* a *Judg of Controversies*, but only

only to *tranſlate* that Title from the *Pope* to *Luther*, or ſome others of our eminent *Reformers*, which is far from our deſign. But this *difference* in *Opinion* does not in the leaſt prove, but that, upon a particular Enquiry into the merit of the Cauſe, one Party may be found to have the advantage of the other, which is all that we pretend to.

3. That this *difference* of the ſeveral Parties of the Reformation in other things, is rather a very ſtrong *Preſumption* (for an Ignorant Perſon who muſt conduct her ſelf by *Preſumptions*) that there is great reaſon for thoſe things wherein they are all *agreed*, and indeed is a greater Argument for the Credibility of the *Reformation* in *general*, than for that of the *Roman Communion*. For to a diſ-intereſſed Perſon the Agreement of thoſe is a more valuable Argument for the Truth of what they ſay, who ſeem moſt of all acted by the *merit* of the things, and leaſt of all influenced by the *Opinions* and *Authorities* of a few; and there can hardly be conceived a more conſiderable Argument of their *freedom* in *Judgment*, than their *actual difference* in other things. What therefore the *Proteſtants* are agreed in, ſeems more likely to be the real ſenſe of all that are ſo agreed upon an Impartial Enquiry; whereas the *Romaniſts* are generally Influenced by a few of the *Court* of *Rome*, to whom the reſt do generally conceive themſelves obliged in Conſcience to conform. And this advantage of the *differences* of *Proteſtants* for recommending their *Credibility* in other things, above that of their Adverſaries, to the Truſt of an *Ignorant Perſon*, will appear the more remarkable, if it be conſidered,

4. That they are not only agreed in *general* in the *fitneſs* of a *Reformation*, but alſo in moſt of the *Particulars* to be *Reformed*. Indeed if they were only agreed in *general*, that it were fit a *Reformation* ſhould be, but agreed in no *Particulars*; it might ſeem too probable a Suſpicion, that it was not *Truth*, but *Faction*, and the diſturbance of the *Publick*, that was their common deſign. But that is far from being the Caſe here.

5. The *Diviſions* of the *Proteſtants* in *Doctrine* are not ſo irreconcileable as they may ſeem. The *Harmony of Confeſſions* ſhews them agreed in the *Principal*. As for the others, it is plain that our *Church of England* does not think them worth contending for, whilſt ſhe admits the ſeveral Parties into her Communion; and if other *Proteſtants* think otherwiſe, yet She is not Reſponſible for them, becauſe She is not of their mind. The moſt pernici-

ous

ous Principles of all, which most Naturally tend to *Division*, and which make the differences resulting from them most impossible to be reconciled; are the differences concerning *Church-Government*; and in that our *Church* has Innovated nothing that should cause any breach, even from the *Roman*, much less from any other part of the *Catholick* Church. And most of their other *Differences* are no longer Irreconcilable than the *Persons* are likely to continue averse to *Reconciliation*; but these *Differences* about *Church-Government* are so derived from the *nature* of the *Things*, as that they may Cause Division among Persons otherwise well meaning, and of a Peaceable Disposition.

6. This Argument from the *Divisions* of *Protestants*, is principally proper for such as are not actually engaged in any *particular Communion* of them; and even to them ought to have no more force than that of a *Prudent Presumption*, till the Person so Presuming might have leisure to examine Particulars. But that seems not to be the Gentlewomans Case whom I suppose to have been hitherto educated in the *Church* of *England*, and to have had sufficient opportunities of Informing her self concerning us. For such a one it would sure be sufficient that *our Church* is no way guilty of these *Divisions*, whatsoever may be the Case of other *Protestants*.

Q 5. *Why the Church of* England *doth not hold up to* Confession, Fasting-days, Holy Oyl, *which we our Selves commend?*

IT is a mistake that the *Questionist* does suppose Us to commend *Holy Oyl*.

However we think all the Instances here mentioned *lawful* and *indifferent*, and so to be as obnoxious to the *Prudence* of particular *Church-Governours*, as other things of that nature are by all acknowledged to be; and we shall conceive our Selves secure of the Gentlewomans Communion, if She will not alter till our Adversaries prove them necessary Antecedently to *Church Authority*, which is more than they will as much as pretend to, at least, concerning some of them.

These things therefore being thus supposed, I shall propose two things to the Gentlewomans Consideration: 1. That supposing We were to blame in omitting them, yet this were no ground for Her to leave our Communion: 2. That as far as they are not imposed by our Church, there was reason for their not imposing them.

1. *Sup-*

1. *Supposing that we were indeed to blame in omitting these Ecclesiastical Observances, yet this would be no sufficient ground to excuse the Gentlewoman for leaving our Communion.* For,

1. No *Indifferent* thing, how *imprudent* or *inexpedient* soever (and that is the highest Charge that the *Churches* mistake in a matter of this nature, is chargeable withal, as long as the Object is supposed of its own nature *Indifferent*) as long as it is not *sinful* (and certainly it can be no Sin to submit for *Peace*'s sake to an *imprudent Constitution*) can excuse a departure from a Communion that is in other regards allowable.

2. Whatever a Separation on this account might be in others, yet it is less excusable in *Subjects*, who are no way Responsible for as much as the *Imprudences* of such Constitutions, and who are certainly bound to *bear* with all tolerable frailties of their lawful Governours, and who are not indeed so well qualified for Judging concerning them, as neither being so well skilled in Politicks generally, nor being made acquainted with the secret Reasons of such Constitutions, which might make that, which without them might seem strange, appear highly commendable when considered with them.

3. The Gentlewomans Sex, and possibly her particular Condition, may not have those Advantages which many others (though Subjects also) have for Judging concerning them.

These Arguments are so agreeable to the Principles of our Adversaries themselves, as that they frequently make use of them for retaining Persons in their own Communion. Which the Gentlewoman may be pleased to take notice of, if any of her Tempters should Question them here, where they are differviceable to their Interests. But farther,

4. *Abuses* in *Governours* acknowledging themselves *Fallible* (tho they be supposed indeed to be *Abuses*) are much more tolerable than in those who do not; seeing there may be hopes that Governours, acknowledging themselves *Fallible*, may in time be better informed, and may then themselves *reform* what is amiss, without the compulsion of their Subjects; which can never be expected from such as pretend to be *Infallible*.

5. If *Abuses* of this Nature be conceived a sufficient Reason for leaving a Communion wherein we are already, much more are they sufficient for hindring our access to another, wherein as yet we are not. So that this same Reason, if it should make her desert the Communion of the *Church of England*, would also hinder her joyning in that of *Rome*, in which the most Judicious and Candid Persons of that Communion will acknowledg *Abuses* of the like nature.

2. *As far as these Omissions are countenanced by our* Church, *there is reason for it.*

I say

ous Principles of all, which most Naturally tend to *Division*, and which make the differences resulting from them most impossible to be reconciled; are the differences concerning *Church-Government*; and in that our *Church* has Innovated nothing that should cause any breach, even from the *Roman*, much less from any other part of the *Catholick* Church. And most of their other *Differences* are no longer Irreconcilable than the *Persons* are likely to continue averse to *Reconciliation*; but these *Differences* about *Church-Government* are so derived from the *nature* of the *Things*, as that they may Cause Division among Persons otherwise well meaning, and of a Peaceable Disposition.

6. This Argument from the *Divisions* of *Protestants*, is principally proper for such as are not actually engaged in any *particular Communion* of them; and even to them ought to have no more force than that of a *Prudent Presumption*, till the Person so Presuming might have leisure to examine Particulars. But that seems not to be the Gentlewomans Case whom I suppose to have been hitherto educated in the *Church* of *England*, and to have had sufficient opportunities of Informing her self concerning us. For such a one it would sure be sufficient that *our Church* is no way guilty of these *Divisions*, whatsoever may be the Case of other *Protestants*.

Q. 5. *Why the Church of* England *doth not hold up to* Confession, Fasting-days, Holy Oyl, *which we our Selves commend?*

IT is a mistake that the *Questionist* does suppose Us to commend *Holy Oyl*.

However we think all the Instances here mentioned *lawful* and *indifferent*, and so to be as obnoxious to the *Prudence* of particular *Church-Governours*, as other things of that nature are by all acknowledged to be; and we shall conceive our Selves secure of the Gentlewomans Communion, if She will not alter till our Adversaries prove them necessary Antecedently to *Church Authority*, which is more than they will as much as pretend to, at least, concerning some of them.

These things therefore being thus supposed, I shall propose two things to the Gentlewomans Consideration: 1. That supposing We were to blame in omitting them, yet this were no ground for Her to leave our Communion: 2. That as far as they are not imposed by our Church, there was reason for their not imposing them.

1. *Sup-*

1. *Supposing that we were indeed to blame in omitting these Ecclesiastical Observances, yet this would be no sufficient ground to excuse the Gentlewoman for leaving our Communion.* For;

1. No *Indifferent* thing, how *imprudent* or *inexpedient* soever (and that is the highest Charge that the *Churches* mistake in a matter of this nature, is chargeable withal, as long as the Object is supposed of its own nature *Indifferent*) as long as it is not *sinful* (and certainly it can be no Sin to submit for *Peace's* sake to an *imprudent Constitution*) can excuse a departure from a Communion that is in other regards allowable.

2. Whatever a Separation on this account might be in others, yet it is less excusable in *Subjects*, who are no way Responsible for as much as the *Imprudences* of such Constitutions, and who are certainly bound to *bear* with all tolerable frailties of their lawful Governours, and who are not indeed so well qualified for Judging concerning them, as neither being so well skilled in Politicks generally, nor being made acquainted with the secret Reasons of such Constitutions, which might make that, which without them might seem strange, appear highly commendable when considered with them.

3. The Gentlewomans Sex, and possibly her particular Condition, may not have those Advantages which many others (though Subjects also) have for Judging concerning them.

These Arguments are so agreeable to the Principles of our Adversaries themselves, as that they frequently make use of them for retaining Persons in their own Communion. Which the Gentlewoman may be pleased to take notice of, if any of her Tempters should Question them here, where they are differviceable to their Interests. But farther,

4. *Abuses* in *Governours* acknowledging themselves *Fallible* (tho they be supposed indeed to be *Abuses*) are much more tolerable than in those who do not; seeing there may be hopes that Governours, acknowledging themselves *Fallible*, may in time be better informed, and may then themselves *reform* what is amiss, without the compulsion of their Subjects; which can never be expected from such as pretend to be *Infallible*.

5. If *Abuses* of this Nature be conceived a sufficient Reason for leaving a Communion wherein we are already, much more are they sufficient for hindring our access to another, wherein as yet we are not. So that this same Reason, if it should make her desert the Communion of the *Church of England*, would also hinder her joyning in that of *Rome*, in which the most Judicious and Candid Persons of that Communion will acknowledg *Abuses* of the like nature.

2. *As far as these Omissions are countenanced by our* Church, *there is reason for it.*

I say

I say [*as far as they are countenanced by our* Church] and therefore the reason I shall give for such Omissions shall be as they are considered under that Notion: 1. Therefore, for *Fasting Days*, I think they are imposed with the same design of *Religion* in our Church as in that of *Rome* (for that account of *Jejunium Cœlianum*, which is given by some, is not taken for the true sense of our Church by her most genuine Sons) and that our Church is conceived to have as much Authority to oblige her Subjects in Impositions of that Nature, so that I cannot look on this disuse prevailing in *Practice* as countenanced by our Church. If the Gentlewoman be so zealously concerned for them, I am sure She may Practice them in our Communion, as well as in that of *Rome*, as several others do.

2. *Confession*, even to a *Priest*, in order to his *Advice* and *Absolution*, our Church, I think, owns as much as that of *Rome*; though we do not make it a *Sacrament*, nor make it *absolutely necessary*, in an *ordinary way*, for the remission of every *particular Sin*, that it be *particularly confessed*. That the *Practice* of it is at present discontinued, our Church, I think, is not the Cause. That She has not interposed her Authority to continue it, might have been excused:

1. Because the thing is only of *Ecclesiastical Right*. For the ancientest obligation to confess Sins, tho *scandalous* in their *own nature*, yet not become *notorious* (tho that differed much from the Confession which is now used in the *Roman Church*) was first introduced after the Persecution by *Decius*, and that in opposition to the *Novatians*, as *Socrates* affirms; and this was also afterwards taken away by *Nectarius* Bishop of *Constantinople*, who ordered every one to be left *to his own Conscience* in that matter, for which other Bishops were so far from censuring him, that they followed him in it almost in all places, as the same Historian tells us, and that omission was vehemently pleaded for by St. *Chrysostom*, and obtained for no small time in the *Greek Church*, whatsoever it did in other places. Whence it follows that She has power, in discretion, to determine concernining its *actual practice* what She thinks fit.

2. Farther, this being supposed, that it was in our Churches power not to *Impose* it, that She did act *prudently* in not *Imposing* it, but rather *recommending* it to the Liberty of *private Devotions*, will appear, if it be considered that, if She had *imposed* it, She must necessarily have excluded all such from her Communion as had not been satisfied with it; and it had not been Prudent to have excluded Persons from her Communion for *Indifferent things* avoidable by her, when She was complaining of the like Tyranny in the *Church of Rome*, especially con-

conſidering that it was alſo likely that the number was great of thoſe who were ſo diſſatisfied with it.

However, if the Gentlewoman be deſirous to *Practice* it for her own Edification, I believe She may be furniſhed with Perſons fitted for it in the *Church of England*.

3. As for the uſe of *Holy Oyl* in any of the pretended *Sacraments*, we do not ſo far condemn it, as to refuſe Communion with other Churches that uſe it; nay, we our Selves retain it as a decent Ceremony of *Conſecration* in the *Coronations* of our *Princes*. Only we again conceive it,

1. A matter *indifferent* in it ſelf, and not Eſſential to thoſe Offices, becauſe of the differences in the Church concerning it.
2. This being ſuppoſed, our *Church* does no way conceive it *Prudent* to continue it; both becauſe it was the deſign of the *Reformation* to reduce the *Sacraments* to their *Primitive Simplicity*, that ſo Perſons might Communicate in them on the ſame free terms as then; and becauſe the Errors of thoſe who made them *Eſſential* to the *Myſteries*, were of great Conſequence, and very fit to be ſo diſcountenanced by a diſcontinuance of the *Practice* it ſelf.

If by the *Holy Oyl* here mentioned, be meant particularly their *Sacrament* of *Extreme Unction*, 1. Our Adverſaries cannot prove a *Sacramental Unction* for the firſt Centuries. A *Miraculous* one they may, but ſeeing themſelves confeſs the ordinary Uſe of the *Miracle* to have ceaſed, there is no neceſſary reaſon obliging our *Church* to continue the *external Ceremony*. This is at leaſt ſufficient to ſhew that it is in the *Churches* power to continue it, or not. Which being ſuppoſed, I add, 2. That even in regard of the *benefit* expected by it, whether of *Bodily recovery*, or *remiſſion of ſins*, or *Spiritual ſtrength* againſt the *Agony of Death*, the Gentlewoman, nor any other Subject of *our Church*, can ſuffer no loſs by our Church's diſcontinuance of it. For all theſe things are as certainly attainable by the means continued in our Church from Unqueſtionable *Apoſtolical Tradition* (as the *Prayers* and *Abſolution* of the *Prieſt* and the *Bleſſed Sacrament*) as they could by the *Unction* it ſelf; ſo that I cannot perceive how a devout Perſon need to be concerned for the want of it, on the terms now mentioned. Eſpecially conſidering, 3. That in the way it is Adminiſtred among them, to Perſons paſt hopes of recovery, and uſually paſt ſenſe of their own condition, it cannot be conceived in any rational way, capable of Edifying the *Devotion* of the

Person concerned, and no other way is suitable to the Dispensation of the *Gospel*. And supposing it no *Sacrament*, there is no reason imaginable why the Prayers of the Assistants for such a Person may not be as acceptable to God, without the observation of this external Ceremony, as with it. And as upon these concessions its Continuance must needs appear unnecessary, so, 4. It would be inexpedient to countenance the Errors consequent to the Opinion of its being a *Sacrament*, which are of so weighty a concernment, by continuance of a Custom which may so easily be spared. These things may suffice at present for satisfying the Gentlewoman of her little concernment for it, without engaging on the Dispute concerning its lawfulness.

Now this Fundamental Principle of our Churches Proceedings in these and the like Particulars, concerning the power of the Church for *Innovating* from *Ancient Customs*, not only by *Adding* new ones, but *Abrogating* old ones, might have been proved not only from the *Principles*, but from several *Practices* of the *Roman Church* her self.

Q. 6. *Why was* Reformation *done by* Act *of* Parliament?

Reformation may be considered two ways: Either,

1. As *Preached* and *Imposed* under pain of *Spiritual Censures*, and of Exclusion from the Communion of the Church, and a deprivation of all the Priviledges consequent to that Communion: And this is certainly the Right of the *Church*, and was accordingly practiced by the *Church* in our *English Reformation*:

2. As Enacted as a *Law* of the *Land*, and consequently as urged the same way as other *Laws* are, under *Temporal Penalties*, and *External Coercion*, and encouraged by *Temporal Advantages*. And this is undoubtedly the Right of the *Secular Power*. And this was all in which the *Secular Power* did concern it self in the *Reformation*.

What I can further foresee in favour of our Adversaries is, that 1. The *Secular Power* ought in *Conscience* to be herein advised by the *Ecclesiasticks*: and, 2. That though *external obedience* may be paid to the mistaken Decrees of the *Secular Power* following the mistaken part of the *Ecclesiasticks*, yet the Obligation (in Conscience and Right) of such Decrees must be derived from the *Justice* of the Churches proceedings in advising the *Magistrate*; so that no Act of the *Magistrate* can make amends for any Essential defect in the proceedings of the *Church*. But the only Effect of the Magistrates

giſtrates concurrence in that Caſe is, that what is already performed without *Hereſie* or *Schiſm* in the *Church*, may be by that means ſetled in ſuch a particular *Commonwealth* without *Schiſm* or *Sedition* in the *State*. And therefore ſeeing they ſuppoſe that at the *Reformation* the greater number of the *Biſhops* then being, were overawed and deprived of the Liberty of their Votes by the *Secular Magiſtrate*, and it is the nature of all Societies to be ſwayed by the greater Part; therefore they may think it unreaſonable to aſcribe the *Reformation* to the *Church* of *England*, but only to a *Schiſmatical part* of it; ſo that the *Magiſtrate* having attempted this *Reformation* without warrant from the *Church*, they think they do well to call our *Reformation* it ſelf *Parliamentary*.

To this therefore I Reply, 1. That the uſe we make of this Topick of the *Magiſtrates* concurrence, is indeed no other than to clear our *Reformation* from being *Seditious*, which is ordinarily charged on Us by our Adverſaries, and much more ordinarily on the *Foreign Proteſtants*.

2. That for clearing the very proceedings of the *Magiſtracy* from being *Heretical* or *Schiſmatical*, to the Conſcience of the *Magiſtracy* it ſelf, it is ſufficient that the *Magiſtracy* gave its *Aſſiſtance* and *Protection* to no other *Church*, but ſuch as, at leaſt, according to the genuine Dictate of their Conſcience, was neither *Heretical* nor *Schiſmatical*. But this Juſtification of the *private Conſcience* of the *Magiſtracy* is, I confeſs, a thing we are at preſent not ſo neceſſarily concerned for; and therefore,

3. We grant farther, that for ſatisfying our own Conſciences of the *Juſtice* of theſe proceedings of the *Magiſtracy*, it is requiſite that we be ſatisfied that they were Adviſed by that part of the *Clergy*, whoſe *Advice* we conceive they ought to have followed. So that if this may appear in the Caſe we are ſpeaking of, this, and this alone, will be a ſufficient Vindication of the *Magiſtrates* proceedings to the Conſciences of his *Subjects*.

4. Therefore the Determination of the *Juſtice* of the *Advice* followed by the *Magiſtrate*, may be reſolved two ways: Either from the *merit* of the *Cauſe*; or from the *Legal Authority* and *Right* the *Perſons* may be preſumed to have to be conſulted on ſuch occaſions. As for the former, it is in the preſent Caſe the principal Diſpute, Whether the *Reformation* undertaken by the *Magiſtrate*, was right or not? and therefore very unfit to be relyed on as a *Preſumption* to prove the *Magiſtrates* proceedings Irregular. The later therefore only is proper to be inſiſted on here. And it conſiſts

sists of two charges: That by the *Laws* of the *Land* the *Magistrate* ought to have been advised by the Bishops then possessed of the several Sees; and, That in advising with the Clergy, whoever they were, he ought to have allowed them the Liberty of speaking their minds, and to have been swayed by the greater part. These things are conceived so necessary, as that the *Magistrate* not observing them, may be presumed to act as no way influenced by the *Clergy*. Which is the Reason why they call our *Reformation* wherein they suppose them not observed, *Parliamentary*.

1. Therefore as to the **Legal Right** of the **Popish Clergy** to advise the **Secular Magistrate**, two things may be Replied:

1. That this *Legal Right* may be forfeited by the Persons by their Personal misdemeanors, and of this forfeiture the *Secular Magistrate* himself is the *proper Judg*; and that this was exactly the *Popish Bishops* Case at that time.

2. That the consideration of this *Legal Right* is of no use for satisfying the *Consciences* of their *Subjects*, which yet is the *only use* that is seasonable for this occasion.

2. *As for the* **Canonical freedom** *to be allowed them in advising, and the obligation of the* **Magistrate** *to follow the advice of the greater part: These* **Canonical Rights** *can only satisfie the Consciences of their own Communion, but cannot be pretended necessary to be observed, where there are different Communions.* For,

1. The *Romanists* themselves never allow that freedom to Persons out of their Communion, as was plain in the Council of *Trent*, and still appears on all occasions.

2. Especially in particular *National Churches*, as ours was, they themselves will not deny that the greater part may prove *Heretical*, and therefore likely to prevail by *Plurality* of *Votes*; in which Case themselves would notwithstanding think it unequal for the *Magistrate* to be swayed by them.

3. This has always been the *Practice* of the *Church*, and the *Catholick Emperors*, never to allow any *Canonical Right* to the Assemblies and Censures of *Hereticks*, as *Athanasius* was restored first by *Maximinus* Bishop of *Triers*, then by Pope *Julius*, after that by *Maximus* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, and at last by the Emperor *Jovinian*, without any *Canonical* revocation of the Synods that had condemned him. Many Instances of the like Nature might be given.

4. The *Popish Clergy* had given the first Precedent of this Liberty themselves, in refusing to admit of the *Canonical Appeal* of the *Protestants* from the *Pope* to a *free General Council*.

FINIS.

244883